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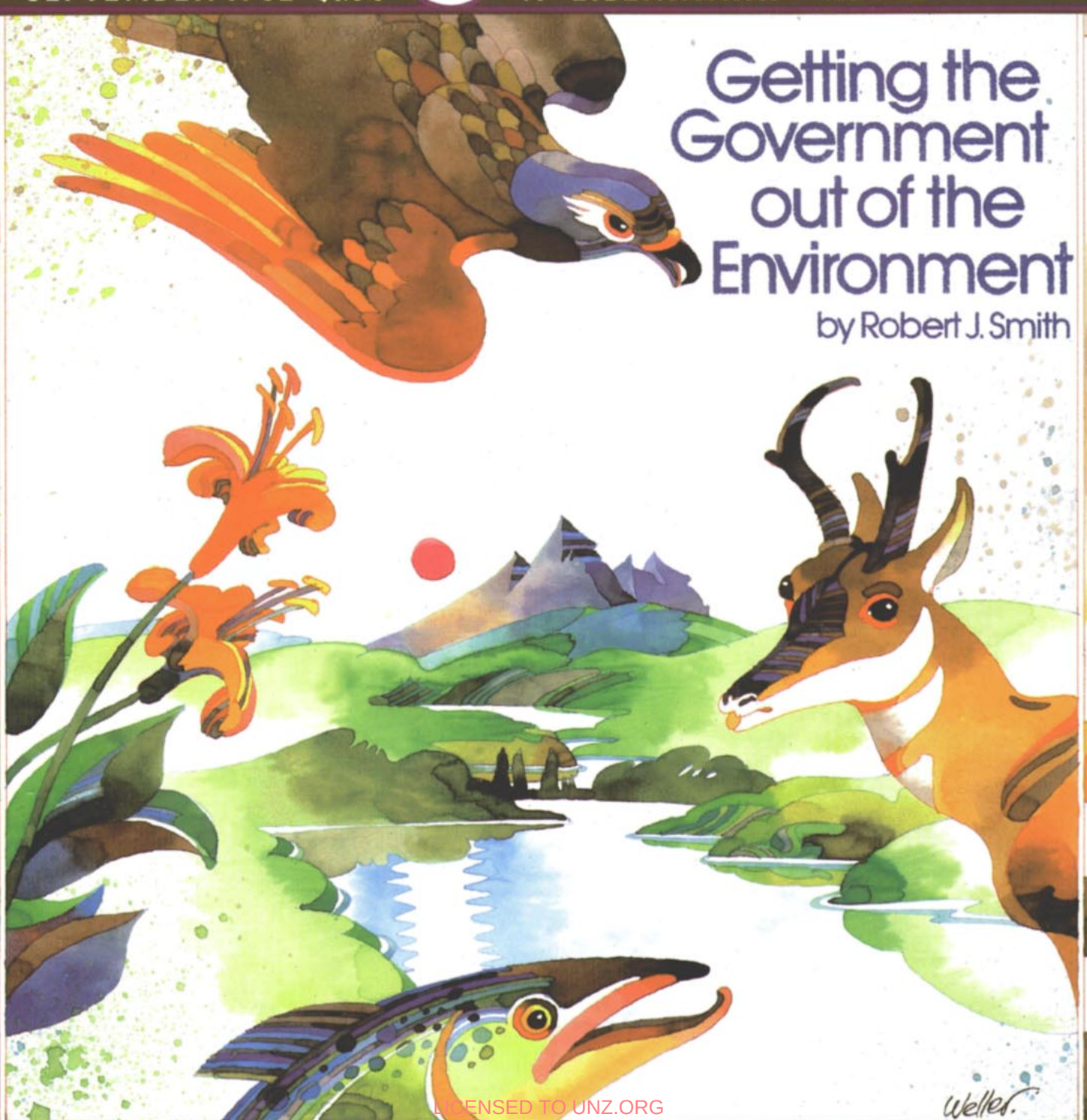
Getting the Government out of the Environment

by Robert J. Smith



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Inquiry, A Libertarian Review (ISSN 0148-5008) Volume 5, Number 13, September 1982. Published monthly by the Libertarian Review Foundation, 1320 G Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. Editorial and advertising offices: 1320 G Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003. (202) 547-2770. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Annual subscription price: $15.00; single-copy price: $1.50. Overseas subscription price: $27.50 surface mail; $50.00 airmail. Send subscription requests and address corrections to P.O. Box 693, Englewood, CO 80151. For subscription problems, call Jerry Boswell at (800) 525-1297. Postmaster: Send address corrections to P.O. Box 693, Englewood, CO 80151.

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Cover illustration by Don Weller

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Res Publica

Or flushed

■ The New Jersey Commission of Investigation urged the [New Jersey] legislature today to delay passage of bills appropriating more than $100 million for local sewer projects. The commission said the funds should be withheld until legislation could be enacted to ensure that the money "won't be squandered or stolen."

—New York Times, July 31, 1982

Protection racket

■ Security for four of the state's top public officials is costing Illinois taxpayers more than $2 million a year, according to public documents. . . .

James Zagel, director of law enforcement, said the state police are offered as guards out of "tradition," and he strongly defended their role.

"I don't think there is enough security," said Zagel. . . .

—Chicago Tribune, July 25, 1982

Government lost and found

■ The Legal Services Corporation [a quasi-government corporation funded by Congress], which has complained that it was denied money to represent the poor properly, has found itself with $41 million in funds left over from fiscal 1981. . . .

William F. Harvey, the corporation's board chairman-designate, said discovery of the "fund balances"—about 20 percent of the $210 million the agency disbursed around the country in fiscal 1981—"is a real shock to us." . . .

Clarence McKee, a Washington attorney [nominated to the Legal Services board of directors by President Reagan] told a reporter he thought the money was being "hidden—sent out to the field so we (the incoming board members) don't know about it."

—Los Angeles Times, July 21, 1982

A five-foot stack of $100 bills, perhaps?

■ Former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew is one of 50,000 people listed by the State of Maryland as owning unclaimed property worth a total of $18 million, officials say. Mr. Agnew was listed by the state as the owner of unspecified property by the State Comptroller's Office.

—New York Times, July 25, 1982

Maybe he should hire one

■ [Senator Jeremiah A. Denton (R-Ala.)] said careers for women sometimes destabilize marriages. "The guy likes to come home and get supper and a couple of martinis from a woman that is reasonably rested," he said.

—Washington Post, July 29, 1982

After all, there's a reputation to defend

■ A court in Leningrad has recently sentenced a Soviet feminist, Miss Natalya Lazareva, to four years in jail, to be followed by two years in internal exile, for "slandering the Soviet state."

—The Economist, July 10, 1982

RENEE GETTIER-STREET

Best little Gestapo in Texas

■ Trouble is brewing in University Park [Texas], a placid little island of affluence where city officials propose to allow building inspectors to enter homes to enforce a rigid repair code. . . .

The sixteen-page code proposal says, among other things, that homeowners can be fined up to $200 a day for weeds in the lawn, cracks in the stairway, or unsound chimneys. . . .

The proposal also authorizes building inspectors to initiate their own complaints and enter homes at any time to enforce the code.

"I'm worried about this," said college professor Stephen Guisinger. "What's to stop the city from coming back and saying we can't smoke in our homes?"

—San Diego Union, July 22, 1982

Off the pigs

■ The Army and scientists from one of the nation's leading agricultural schools worked in the 1950s to develop a way to spread hog cholera with turkey feather bombs, according to the *Des Moines Sunday Register.*

The paper said the scientists from Iowa State University helped in building and testing a bomb that exploded in air, releasing thousands of turkey feathers carrying deadly hog cholera virus. Though deadly to swine, the disease cannot be transmitted to humans.

—Washington Post, July 19, 1982

The courageous opt for bankruptcy

■ The speaker of the house, Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., today assailed a proposed constitutional amendment to balance the federal budget as a "cowardly way out" of the nation's economic problems.

—New York Times, July 14, 1982

Hell no, we won't go

■ At least one federal agency tried to herd some of its employees up to the Capitol the other day for the White House–sponsored rally in support of a proposed balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution. Officials at the Department of Energy . . . fanned out through the building trying to round up volunteers to attend the rally that featured President Reagan, who wants to abolish their agency.

According to one insider, workers in some offices hooted and jeered the recruiters.

—New York Times, July 22, 1982

Free speech a la panamena

■ [Panamanian] President Aristides Royo resigned today in a surprise move described by a senior official as a "constitutional coup d'état *a la panamena"* by the national guard. . . .

[A senior official also] said that the shutting down of the newspapers, including the forcible closing of the opposition daily *La Prensa* by guardsmen reportedly armed and carrying rubber hoses, was part of an effort to "moralize social communication" and "to avoid insults."

—Washington Post, July 31, 1982

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Standing Reaganomics on its head . . .

Strangling the economy

The once-vaunted "Reagan Revolution," if it ever was a revolution, is dead. It is becoming increasingly clear that Reaganomics merely represents a different chapter in the story of government-run-amok, with spending increasing a bit more slowly, but the fundamental course of things unchanged. The record $228-billion five-year tax increase should convince even the hardiest Reaganauts of this.

Though Reagan has yet to flip-flop a half-dozen times on economic policy, as did Carter, his record is embarrassing. Consider:

- One day the administration is lauding its 10 percent income-tax rate cut, which almost makes up for social security tax hikes and bracket creep; the next day the administration is masterminding the largest peacetime tax increase in American history. The bill, which could not pass without Reagan's support, takes back nearly half of the business-tax reductions approved last year, and imposes withholding on interest and dividends, which candidate Reagan opposed. (So much for supply-side gospel.)
- One day administration officials speak of the need to control federal spending; the next day Reagan announces that he does not feel bound by the ceilings on military spending that he and Congress had agreed to for fiscal years 1984 and 1985. Indeed, the *New York Times* reports that the administration is now planning on calling for an 11 percent *real* increase in military spending in the 1984 fiscal year.
- One day the administration unveils a plan to reduce some social security benefits, noting the need to control "entitlements" spending; Reagan later withdraws the plan, saying that he really didn't mean it. Administration officials later propose reducing cost-of-living increases; they then drop the idea and claim credit for Congress's passing the increases.
- One day the administration predicts a fall in interest rates; the next day the Treasury announces it will borrow from the capital markets a record $100 billion over the next six months.

Of course, it wasn't supposed to turn out this way. But Reagan's initial efforts to simply slow the growth of federal spending have been overwhelmed by military spending increases, continued growth in "entitlement" spending, and unexpected expenditures caused by the recession. As a result, federal spending increased 7 percent in real terms from October 1981 to May 1982. In fact, the Joint Economic Committee projects that the federal government's slice of the GNP will be 24 percent before the year is over—three points higher than in 1979, and another record. (And some people are blaming deficits on low taxes!)

The budget process has now degenerated from a fight to reduce government spending into a squabble over who should get the nearly $800 billion likely to be spent in the 1983 fiscal year. The military is winning with defense spending now set to increase from $187.5 billion in 1982 to $214 billion in 1983, and to total $1.6 trillion over five years (unless the Reagan administration listens to the Defense Department analysts who claim that they need an additional $750 billion beyond that).

But this emphasis on the military should lead no one to believe that the administration has gutted the New Deal and Great Society programs that have helped create our trillion-dollar national debt. Reagan not only protected social security from his budget director's knife; he also exempted most of the "safety net" programs from significant reductions as well. The result, according to *Forbes* magazine, is that "social spending's share of federal spending will drop only modestly under the Reagan administration's planned budgets; it will, by design, drop somewhat more as a proportion of GNP. Overall, there are no Reagan cutbacks—only a hoped-for leveling off."

The Reagan tax revolution is a similar tale. The 1981 tax rate cuts were admirable, even though they just reduced future increases; despite this "tax giveaway," federal tax revenues are up 6.2 percent in real terms this year, the briskest pace since 1977. But Reagan, instead of steadfastly defending the taxpayer, joined with Republican Finance Committee chairman Robert Dole (who has never been a friend of the taxpayer; see "Dole waits but the lightning fizzles," *INQUIRY*, February 18, 1980) to pass a grab bag of new and increased taxes. In fact, passage of the Reagan/Dole tax plan, in conjunction with social security tax increases and inflation-induced bracket creep, will wipe out all of the personal income tax relief promised through 1985.

Not surprisingly, the administration's credibility, already low, was not enhanced by the immediate disavowal of the administration's wildly optimistic midyear forecast the very day it was released. An unnamed senior official was quoted as making the charming observation that "we have no firm notion of where the economy is going."

Unfortunately, Reaganomics is increasingly failing in other areas as well. Though Reagan has resisted protectionist pressures in some areas, he has launched vicious attacks against free trade in others, by, for example, imposing quotas on Japanese auto imports and sugar imports, and recently concluding an agreement to limit European steel imports.

There has also been unnecessary idleness—even backsliding—in reducing government regulation. The administration backed away from any proposal to deregulate natural gas, failed to propose any meaningful change in the Clean Air Act, and just dropped its proposals to increase the freedom of younger teenagers to work. Even worse,

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regulation of the trucking industry has actually increased.

Unfortunately, there is an impending tragedy beyond the immediate damage from the $225 billion tax increases, massive military spending increases, protectionism, and trucking reregulation. And that is the perception that the free-market policies reflected in Reagan's rhetoric have been tried and have failed. In fact, those policies will not have failed because they will never have been truly implemented; Reaganomics will have been a less offensive version of Carternomics or Nixonomics perhaps, but not the dramatic change from politics as usual that we so desperately need.

If this happens, an undeserved opening will have been provided for the likes of Ted Kennedy and Felix Rohatyn, the old-line liberals who want more social spending and a little less military spending, and the Mussolini-style corporate statists who want a "new" industrial policy of taxpayer subsidies, political management, and government control. If people are convinced that the free market has been tried and has failed, they might fall victim to such demagoguery.

As the economy dies of the strangulation caused by government's seizing more resources and controlling more activities, Reaganomics has called for a slower increase in the pressure on the throat. Unfortunately, it can't even deliver on that. ▣

Closing our eyes to murder . . .

Death count in El Salvador

In the past three years, the people of El Salvador have suffered through the equivalent of a "limited" nuclear war of the sort the Pentagon has told us so much about recently. Its 34,000 civilian deaths and 300,000 refugees are, in proportion to the population, the same as 1.5 million American deaths and nine times that many refugees. But this is a cataclysm caused not by hydrogen bombs but by small arms—many of them used against the citizenry by their own government.

El Salvador's national assembly is today headed by one Roberto d'Aubuisson, of whom former U.S. ambassador Robert White has said there is "compelling, if not 100 percent conclusive, evidence" that he organized the March 1980 assassination of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero. The country is ruled de facto by a military whose forces have murdered, so far with impunity, four American nuns and thousands of their own innocent people. In 1981 alone, according to official U.S. embassy statistics, 13,353 Salvadorans were beheaded, shot, or beaten to death—a figure that, however large, almost certainly underestimates the extent of the violence.

It's not a pretty picture, and no one pretends that it is. Even the Reagan administration's spokesman on human rights, Elliott Abrams, admits that "you have a long, horrifying tradition of abuse of prisoners" in El Salvador and that "the human rights situation continues to be bad." Nonetheless, he and Secretary of State George Shultz both stand on the assertion that there have been "tangible signs of progress" on human rights.

There's a reason for this official optimism: President Reagan has been required by Congress to certify, twice a year, that the human rights situation in El Salvador is improving sufficiently to justify continued U.S. aid to the regime. In particular, the administration had to confirm in late July that El Salvador "is making a concerted and significant effort to comply with internationally recognized human rights" and "is achieving substantial control over all elements of its own armed forces, so as to bring to an end the indiscriminate torture and murder of Salvadoran civilians by these forces." In addition, Congress has insisted that the government of El Salvador show good faith in implementing a broad program of land reform and bringing to justice the killers of the American nuns.

The administration came through as expected, citing a "downward trend" in political violence, efforts by the leadership of the armed forces to cope with "torture and execution of prisoners . . . and terrorist activity" by the military, and, finally, steps taken to move ahead on land redistribution.

The official report made a lot of people unhappy. Various members of Congress called it a "sham" and "unjustified." A 272-page study issued by the American Civil Liberties Union and the Americas Watch Committee (an outgrowth of the Helsinki Watch) concluded that "indiscriminate torture and murder of Salvadoran citizens has continued during this period, and all branches of the security forces have been implicated in this repression." On the basis of figures supplied by the legal aid office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador, the report estimated that government security forces killed more than 2800 civilians in the first half of this year.

The pursuit of human rights abroad becomes a mockery when mass murder can be weighed and described as "progress." Such an official determination is but a thin, sanctimonious veil over the cold facts of state policy. El Salvador is hardly a special case. When the Justice Department decided it wanted to deport a load of black Haitian refugees, it told Congress last spring that Baby Doc was really a benign ruler who didn't engage in political repression. And, until recently, the State Department pressed for the deportation of Ethiopian refugees on the grounds that their Marxist government was good enough to go home to. The State Department changed its line only after UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick inadvertently called the Ethiopian government "one of the most oppressive . . . in the world."

But there is something worse, perhaps, than the naked hypocrisy of closing our eyes to the crimes committed by our allies in El Salvador and elsewhere in the Third World. And that is the fact that the United States now finds itself once again taking charge of the entire domestic and foreign policy of a foreign country. As CIA Director William Casey has boasted, "We helped out in the El Salvador election" through clandestine means; we have tried to organize and implement the seizure and redistribution of land; we have trained the country's troops and tried to set standards for their comportment during a civil war; and now we are trying to direct their legal system to bring to justice soldiers accused of crimes against civilians. "Aid" is too neutral a term; the reality is that the United States is informally colonizing the country. Salvadorans don't want that and neither, according to all the polls, do Americans.

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The answer isn't, as some liberals would have it, to twist yet more arms in El Salvador until the government follows our wishes and commands. The Salvadorans aren't puppets and we have no business being puppet masters. But neither is the answer, as many conservatives would have it, simply to dispense with human rights and write the Salvadoran military a blank check on the account of the American taxpayer. The Marxist alternative in El Salvador may in the long run be worse than the current military oligarchy, but that's a question for the Salvadorans to decide, not Americans, who have better ways to spend their money than supporting murder in Central America. ■

Not the answer to minority poverty . . .

A Marshall Plan for blacks?

Unemployment among blacks is 18.7 percent, double that of whites, and the highest since World War II. More than half of the black teens in this country are unemployed; a whole generation may never reach even the first rung of the ladder of economic opportunity.

No wonder, then, that black leaders, such as John E. Jacob, head of the National Urban League, are desperate for answers. Jacob recently called for a $100 billion national public-works program to lower unemployment—a black Marshall Plan, so to speak.

Unfortunately, this and other proposals for still more government intervention betray a fundamental misunderstanding of the source of the economic problems of minorities. Indeed, there is something ironic about the eagerness of black leaders to get, in economist Thomas Sowell's words, "bogged down trying to make government a positive force." Given the government's historically odious and volatile record in dealing with minorities, blacks should seek to make government a neutral force, to restrain it so that it won't destroy their job opportunities and get in the way of their educating their children and finding decent housing. Political gains can be swept away with a change in administration; there is no substitute for individual economic success and independence from the public sector.

In particular, black political activity should focus on encouraging:

Economic growth. The standard of living of blacks increased during the 1960s as the economy grew, but has fallen as the economy has stagnated. Unfortunately, $100 billion "Marshall Plans" would further stall economic growth, since the $100 billion must come from increased taxes or borrowing, which will crowd out private investment, or from the printing of more money, which will fuel inflation and destabilize the economy. Instead, we must reduce both the amount of government interference in the economy, through taxes, spending, and regulation, and the changeability of government policies, which makes private long-term planning and investment impossible.

Free labor markets. Though racial discrimination still exists in America, it is not the primary barrier to blacks advancing in the marketplace. The minimum-wage law, for instance, prohibits the hiring of people who produce less than the minimum level. This hurts those with the least education, experience, and skills—particularly minorities and minority youth.

Other government job obstacles include the Davis-Bacon Act, which mandates the payment of artificially high union-scale wages for federally funded construction projects, excluding many blacks from construction work since minority workers are concentrated in nonunion firms. Further, occupational licensure for barbers, TV repairmen, cab drivers, and some 600 other occupations has raised entry costs for jobs through fees, educational requirements, and permit costs, helping to freeze out thousands of blacks seeking work.

Educational choice. Blacks have experienced more than most people the stultifying effect of an inadequate education. Yet the public schools, particularly those in the inner cities, don't educate students; the National Assessment of Educational Progress recently found that up to 85 percent of the seventeen-year-olds they tested lacked specific job skills.

If blacks are to move up society's economic ladder, they must receive a quality education, which in many areas is provided only by private schools, such as the famous slum school in Chicago run by Marva Collins, and the predominantly black Catholic schools in Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, most blacks are unable to take advantage of private opportunities because they pay taxes to support the public schools (run by upper-middle-class whites), and are unable to afford the additional private-school tuition. Reducing property taxes and enacting tuition tax credits would greatly increase the educational opportunities available to black students, and their potential for later success.

Housing production. Blacks face a critical problem in finding affordable and decent housing. Yet the housing crisis has been manufactured almost entirely by the government. Zoning limits the available supply of land, and government regulations, fees, and taxes increase housing prices by thousands of dollars. The result of these policies—often intended—is to ensure white, upper-income suburbs and crowded, deteriorating black inner-cities.

Even government programs supposedly passed to help the poor have been disastrous. Urban renewal, for example, demolished more than a half-million housing units, displacing thousands of blacks and other minorities. Rent control has consistently reduced the supply and quality of apartments, particularly in the larger cities.

Reduced dependence on transfer programs. Few welfare programs are designed to help blacks. As Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) has noted, "With astonishing consistency middle-class professionals—whatever their racial or ethnic backgrounds—when asked to devise ways of improving the conditions of lower-class groups, would come up with schemes of which the first effect would be to improve the condition of the middle-class professionals, and the second might or might not be that of improving the condition of the poor." Most of these programs are administered and enforced in a manner destructive of individual freedom and dignity, and calculated to foster permanent dependency. They help create the lack of hope that characterizes true poverty.

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Even with such programs, blacks apparently lose more to government than they gain: national art and humanities subsidies, handouts to dairy farmers, aid to higher education, and unrestrained military spending, for example, all cost blacks dearly. One study of Washington, D.C., found that there was a net outflow in taxes of $4 million—the residents would have been better off if all government transfers had never been made.

What the black community needs is not yet another multi-billion-dollar government program, administered by middle-class white professionals, that will slow economic growth and encourage dependency. Instead, black political activists should work to remove the government programs that deny minorities an equal opportunity to compete, get a quality education, and find decent housing. What blacks need is not a Marshall Plan, but a freedom plan. ■

SHORT TAKES . . .

Lost at sea

■ **DESPITE OUR FEARS [SEE "TORPEDO** the Law of the Sea," *INQUIRY,* May 17], the Reagan administration has courageously decided not to sign the Law of the Sea Treaty. We were neither surprised nor disappointed by the resulting howls from America's curious breed of internationalists, who believe that any treaty, no matter how flawed, will bring world peace and nirvana, and from the Third World dictators around the world attempting to blame the United States for poverty caused by their stultifying economic and political systems. But, if not surprised, we were disappointed by the parroting of these claims by much of the establishment press, which has so much to lose from the principles embodied in the treaty.

As we have detailed before, the Law of the Sea Treaty will make deep seabed mining virtually impossible. ["Battle of the Seabed," *INQUIRY,* July 6, 1981.] An Authority, controlled by the Third World, would limit access to the seabed, collect taxes, appropriate private technology, and limit mineral production. An Enterprise, controlled by the Authority, would mine the seabed, with its funding and technology provided by private miners and the industrialized nations. And even the limited access provided private companies would likely be swept away some fifteen years down the road when the treaty is opened for amendment without our consent.

But more serious is the treaty's encouragement of totalitarian global management at our expense. The Third World, undeterred by the failure of totalitarian economic and political systems at home, is attempting to create international institutions in the same mold. The Law of the Sea Treaty, by creating an international institution under Third World control to acquire and redistribute wealth, resources, and technology, would move the so-called New International Economic Order and New International Information Order much closer to reality. Ironically, much of the establishment press, which vigorously opposed the attempts by UNESCO to control international press activities, supports the United Nation's many proposals, including the Law of the Sea Treaty, to control international business activities.

Rejecting the treaty is only the first step; the United States must help create alternative arrangements to allow deep seabed mining to flourish and to protect the freedom of the seas. Only then will the interests of the peoples of the world—as opposed to that of the international lawyers, bureaucrats, and diplomats—prevail.

■ **IT'S AMUSING TO WATCH GOVERN-** ment officials who believe that spouting a little rhetoric about liberty can disguise the authoritarian nature of their policies. Take General Thomas Turnage, the director of the Selective Service System, for instance. In testimony before a House subcommittee, contending that registration "is not an imposition on our young men," he quoted Daniel Webster: " 'God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard and defend it.' "

Unfortunately for Turnage, his staff forgot to tell him that Webster was perhaps the nation's most eloquent opponent of the draft. We would like to know, as did Webster, where it is "written in the Constitution, in what article or section is it contained, that you may take children from their parents, and parents from their children, and compel them to fight the battles of any war in which the folly or wickedness of government may engage it?"

■ **THE EMBARGO AGAINST THE EAST-** West pipeline yet again demonstrates the Reagan administration's disregard for the economic value of free international exchange, and its lack of understanding of the dangerous political consequences of economic warfare.

The economic damage wrought by the embargo is significant—millions of dollars in sales and thousands of jobs lost. Indeed, the embargo was so broadly written that it abrogated existing contracts to sell oil-drilling technology developed even five or more years ago, technology that poses no threat to the United States in Soviet hands. And the sales and jobs lost will only increase in the future, as other nations increasingly turn to other suppliers to avoid suffering from the capriciousness of the U.S. government.

Of perhaps even greater concern is the provocative nature of this and other economic sanctions. If the Soviet Union is ready to collapse, as some contend, then the most dangerous course of action to take is to try to make it collapse faster. Foreign pressure on nations typically increases their national unity, and often causes them to strike out: It was an American embargo on oil and iron that helped trigger the Japanese attack on this country in World War II, and American presidents have threatened war in the Middle East if the flow of oil to us is cut off. Why should it be any different for the Soviets?

We have become used to seeing officials who say they support free enterprise violating the economic freedom of Americans. But it is unusual to see people who claim that the Soviet Union possesses military superiority advocating policies that may push it to take drastic military action.

■ **IT IS DISCOURAGING TO SEE THE *NEW*** *Republic* [August 2, 1982] continue the demagogic campaign to raise "business taxes." Businesses don't pay taxes; people do. Laying taxes on business simply hides who's paying, and makes it easier for the politicians to take more of the people's income and spend it. Better that shareholders, customers, and workers know that they're being taxed, than for them to think that they are getting a "free lunch" with business paying the bill. ■

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Letters

Curious

I'm a new reader of *INQUIRY* and as a general rule enjoy your magazine a great deal. I have, however, noticed a certain hostility toward Israel I find somewhat curious.

If we look around the Middle East, what do we see government-wise? Regimes that oppress their women, march their men off to war based on the whim of a religious dictator, and prevent their own people from being exposed to the knowledge of all humanity. And then there's Israel. Israel is different; it is a functioning democracy. It should receive the best wishes of all freethinking people.

Charles A. Pardee, Jr.
Falls Church, Va.

Arafat's commentaries

For a long time now *INQUIRY*'s commentaries on the Arab/Israeli conflict have sounded as though they were being written by Yasir Arafat.

Your editorial "West Bank Blues" in the May 17 issue is the most narrow-minded incitement to hatred I have ever read in *INQUIRY*. Its tone is one of pure bigotry, with quotations and descriptions no doubt gathered from the propaganda office of the Palestine Liberation Organization, whose accuracy you would no doubt not question. The cartoon characterizations look as though they were inspired by the artists of Nazi Germany.

On most issues *INQUIRY* tries to take a reasoned approach, developing issues and making intelligent evaluations. On the Arab/Israeli issue, for which there are, admittedly, reasonable differences of opinion, you have put on blinders.

Robert Slomovitz
Plainview, N.Y.

Our criticisms of Israel—based, by the way, on reports published by the New York Times, Newsweek, *and the Israeli press—reflect no contempt for the Israeli people, nor any appreciation for Israel's dictatorial and militaristic neighbors. But the question here isn't Israel's survival, except as a free society; Israel's rout of PLO forces in Lebanon shows once again that no Arab army is its match. What is at stake is the peace of the Middle East and, more broadly, the peace of a world tied into knots by superpower alliances and military commitments. Thousands of patriotic Israelis have criticized their government in terms no less blunt than we chose. Their courage in continuing to speak up during the latest war is a tribute to their wisdom in seeking a course that will bring a lasting peace to Israel and the Middle East in the years to come.* —THE EDITORS

Corrections, please

I would like to correct two misrepresentations in John Hospers's review of *The Freedom Principle* [July]. I do believe that some resources should be public property. But I do not hold that *all* resources should be public property. Neither do I hold that contract fees should be used to pay for the court system. Contract fees are one possible way to pay for part of the *civil* court system.

Lansing Pollock
State University College at Buffalo
Buffalo, N.Y.

Junk-think journalism

Peter Pringle's article in the July issue, "Putting World War III on Ice," is replete with error, both conceptual and otherwise. It is also marred by an unnerving "gee golly, isn't the freeze neat?" writing style, but that is another matter. Since the conceptual problems with the article overflow the banks of possible correction in a letter, I will restrict myself to two relatively modest mistakes.

Mr. Pringle states that SALT II would have required the Soviets to dismantle 10 percent of their "largest and most threatening" intercontinental ballistic missiles. This is not so; the Soviets *would* have had to dismantle some 250 systems, but they would have chosen their least capable systems, not their most capable systems. The treaty gave them this freedom to choose. Mr. Pringle is apparently trying to make a reference to the Soviet SS-18, that being the largest and most threatening Soviet system. The treaty, by the way, allows the Soviets 308 of these SS-18s, while it allows the United States no comparable heavy modern ICBMs.

Mr. Pringle also says that Richard Perle, a chief aide to Senator Henry Jackson of Washington, "led Republican opposition to SALT II." Doesn't Mr. Pringle find it somewhat odd that a fellow working for a Democrat led Republican opposition? The point here is, of course, that opposition to SALT II was voiced by both Democrats and Republicans, just as the treaty enjoyed support from both parties.

If logic and common sense alone do not unmask the "freeze movement" for the well-intentioned "junk-think" that it is, sloppy journalism will surely help.

Adam M. Garfinkle
Foreign Policy Research Institute
Philadelphia, Pa.

Gardner's crusade

Every once in a while an article in *INQUIRY* seems very out of place. Such a thing is true of Martin Gardner's review [June] of Colin Wilson's new book.

Gardner's comment that Wilson fails to learn from those older and wiser is indicative of Gardner's proven attitude toward dissenters; if they cannot be dispensed with by asserting the scientific faith, then they should be bullied and their characters impugned. The truth takes a back seat.

Gardner's crusade against so-called pseudoscience amounts to a slavish defense of orthodoxy. As far as freedom of inquiry is concerned, Gardner obviously thinks Jefferson was all wet when he proclaimed that in his university truth would be unafraid to meet error in the open; Gardner has so little faith that he can defend his truth in the open that he prefers the dark alleys of innuendo, roorback, and character assassination.

Miles Fowler
Sonoma, Ca.

GARDNER replies: I don't think Jefferson was wet, and I do believe strongly in a free market for ideas. The question is one of tactics in the free market. How much respect should the science community give to journalists who advocate, say, Nazi anthropology, the theory that the earth is hollow and open at the poles, or beliefs that mischievous demons haunt houses?

Fowler gives himself away when he speaks of my crusade against "so-called" pseudoscience. If he really thinks that Wilson's book on poltergeists upholds "scientific" theories worthy of dignified treatment, then he and I live on different mental continents.

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Read it first

In Murray Rothbard's article "Where the Left Goes Wrong on Foreign Policy" [July], he criticizes a piece I wrote on Nicaragua.

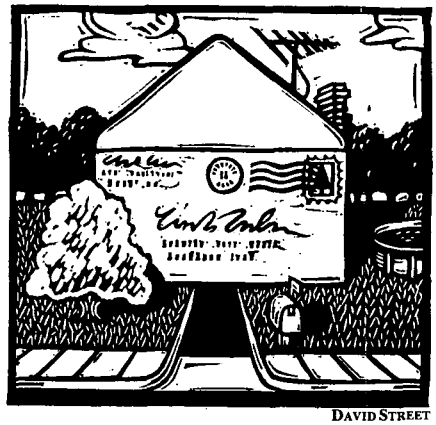
Rothbard first criticizes my article as an example of how the "left" favors "positive intervention—U.S. aid—in the affairs of socialist Nicaragua, along with the blackmailing claim that without such aid the regime would turn Marxist." At no point in my article is U.S. aid even mentioned! Similarly, the "blackmailing claim" nowhere appears. I did condemn Washington for some *negative* interventions (destabilization, misrepresentation), acts which Rothbard apparently also disapproves of.

For Rothbard to cite me as evidence that "the left has a long way to go to reach a policy of nonintervention" seems especially ludicrous inasmuch as my article urged Reagan to follow Franklin Roosevelt's example by treating Nicaragua today the way FDR treated nationalistic Mexico in the thirties, i.e., by not intervening positively or negatively. The clearest policy recommendation to appear in my article is the following: ". . . if the question is, 'Can the U.S. live with nationalist, leftist regimes in the hemisphere,' the answer must be yes." "Live with" implies neither approval nor financial underwriting; it implies tolerance and normal diplomatic relations.

Much of my article dealt with (then) Secretary of State Haig's claim that Nicaragua had become "totalitarian" by early 1982. For saying Nicaragua was not totalitarian, I entered Rothbard's purgatory of leftists who relax their "standards of truth and freedom" when it comes to socialist regimes. As a political scientist, I often use the term "totalitarian." I try to do so with objectivity and precision. I would be interested in hearing from Mr. Rothbard the names of any serious students of Central America, or of any experienced diplomatic personnel stationed in Managua, who would characterize the Sandinista regime of February 1982 (or today, for that matter) as "totalitarian."

In my article I explicitly cited the restrictions imposed by the Sandinista government on the press, businessmen, and workers. I characterized the regime as "one-party hegemony." What Rothbard considers a "whitewash" apparently was my attempt to explain some of the economic and security problems that gave rise to these restrictions. If you are unwilling to consider such conditions, so be it. To me, ignoring them seems as silly as describing the mandatory curbs on business, travel, and the press in the United States during 1941–45 without mentioning that a war was going on.

Not yet recovered from a devastating civil war, Nicaragua has been hit by a series of hostile acts orchestrated by the hemisphere's most powerful nation. Given the methods used by Washington to destabilize Allende in Chile, the Sandinistas would be fools



DAVID STREET

not to suspect the worst from every opposition group at home and abroad. There may be better ways to handle this threat than those the Sandinistas have employed, but I can see little point in discussing liberty in Nicaragua without taking the concrete situation into account.

Given the precariousness of that situation, I argued that the emergency measures then in force (February 1982) did "not seem out of line." Rothbard replied with an *ad hominem* attack: "I suppose whether or not they seem 'out of line' depends on one's perspective: whether from inside Managua or sitting in capitalist comfort in Ithaca, New York." As my article made clear, I wrote shortly after returning from Nicaragua. Not just Managua, Mr. Rothbard, but Masaya, León, and the cotton fields of the west coast.

Before Rothbard writes another article, would he take the trouble of actually *reading* the works he intends to criticize?

Eldon Kenworthy
Ithaca, N.Y.

ROTHBARD replies: It is ironic to see Professor Kenworthy following the Jeane Kirkpatrick line of quibbling about whether or not a particular despotism is "totalitarian." Will we next see him completing the circle by defending the Sandinista regime as "only authoritarian"? The "surrounded by enemies" excuse for Nicaragua has, of course, been the favorite rationale for every invasion of liberty everywhere, and that will be precisely the rationale if Senator Jeremiah Denton and his friends succeed in reviving HUAC or the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

I did not specifically say in my article that Professor Kenworthy favored U.S. aide to Nicaragua, and I regret it if the wording gave rise to that impression. Since we find that Kenworthy differs from his colleagues on the left by favoring nonintervention, perhaps he can now go all the way by abandoning apologetics for tyrannical regimes if they happen to be leftist.

INQUIRY's mission

Jonathan Marshall ["Who's Afraid of Defense Reform?" August] can't have it both ways. On the one hand he ends an ode to defense reformers by telling us that if they "expose even a few of the worst lemons . . . they will have done us all a service." Then he (correctly) points out that by pushing the Pentagon to increase the ability of its war machine to intervene "we may lose far more in lives and money than defense reform can ever hope to save."

Let *National Review* worry about how many megadeaths for the buck our weapons can produce. *INQUIRY* should concentrate on promoting disarmament and the kind of nonInterventionist foreign policy that will avoid war.

Edward H. Crane III
Washington, D.C.

(Mr. Crane, a former publisher of INQUIRY, is a member of the board of directors of the Libertarian Review Foundation.)

MARSHALL replies: Because I don't favor total unilateral disarmament, I can indeed have it both ways. The United States can both withdraw from its foreign military commitments to a continental defense and *ensure that its remaining weapons—a small fraction of current stocks—work properly. The key issue is foreign policy, but defense reform has its place in that larger debate.*

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Law

In search of free speech

THOMAS J. MCGREW

THE CASE ITSELF WAS trivial—a St. Louis lawyer broke Missouri's legal-advertising rules by saying "real estate" instead of "property law"—and the Supreme Court's unanimous pronouncement that "truthful advertising related to lawful activities is entitled to the protection of the First Amendment" was not what you'd pick to inspire the charge up San Juan Hill.

Still, the Supreme Court decision last January looked like important First Amendment news. For forty years, the Court had been insisting that the First Amendment's freedoms of press and speech did not apply to "commercial speech" (i.e., advertising), leaving a very high percentage of the output of the nation's printing presses beyond the protection of freedom of the press. Now it seemed the Court was finally ready to bring advertising under the First Amendment. The Court's two conditions, truth and legality, apply to most kinds of communication. The legal categories of libel, perjury, and fraud are simply names for accepted ways of penalizing untrue speech. And under current law, freedom of speech won't save the businessman who says, "Okay, George, we'll stop competing and fix the prices" from serving some time in the hoosegow. So the Supreme Court was putting advertising on pretty much the same constitutional footing as most other communication.

Or so it seemed. There really isn't any way to tell from a single case. When the Court makes an announcement like this it sets itself a test. If later cases uphold the rule through the variegated factual permutations a 230-million-person pluralistic society can generate, the brave new words really are the law of the land. If not, they are merely the law covering lawyers who say "real estate" instead of "property law" while some different law governs everything else in the universe.

Within three months the Court faced that test and flunked. In April the Court let stand a Nevada decision barring the Las Vegas newspapers from running truthful ads for a lawful activity.

In this case, the lawful activity was run by Princess Sea Industries, Inc., nationally notorious as the Chicken Ranch brothel. The Chicken Ranch is in Nye County (sixty-five miles northwest of Las Vegas) where brothels are legal and licensed, just like lawyers. In more prudish Clark County (where Las Vegas is) lawyers are legal but brothels are not. The Chicken Ranch is not, however, an outcall operation; the service it offers cannot be performed at a distance of sixty-five miles and, in fact, is provided *only* in Nye County where it is perfectly legal.

It took decades of haphazard court decisions to bring about this mess.

Under Nevada law it is a crime—$500 for a first offense; then they up the ante—to advertise a legal brothel in places that don't have legal brothels. A simple statement of the address of such a place is not permitted. Nor the telephone number. Nor even the information that you could get the phone number by calling directory assistance.

What this law forbids is not an act of illegal prostitution or, even, any kind of solicitation of an act of illegal prostitution. What the Nevada law forbids is "truthful advertising related to lawful activities," which is precisely what the Supreme Court had said in January the First Amendment protects. So we end up with one First Amendment for licensed lawyers; a different one for licensed prostitutes; and God knows what for licensed chiropractors, acupuncturists, bookmakers, or liquor distributors. What's missing here is precisely what should distinguish the personal preference of five justices from constitutional law: some sense of rationality and predictability.

BECAUSE LAW EVOLVES slowly, nobody can create a problem like this all at once. It takes decades, even generations, of haphazard court decisions to bring about a really major mess.

This particular mess got started in 1940 when F. J. Chrestensen bought a surplus Navy submarine and brought it to New York. Chrestensen printed up handbills offering a tour of his sub for a quarter (children, 15 cents). When the police commissioner told him it was against the law to distribute commercial handbills but not handbills devoted to "a public protest," Chrestensen promptly took back his handbills, toned down the sales pitch a little, deleted the price but not the description of his tour, printed his salty views on the city's dock department on the reverse side, and proceeded to distribute his "protest" handbills.

When the case got to the Supreme Court two years later, the justices perceived (correctly, I'm sure) that Chrestensen's diatribe against the city government, sincere or not, was mainly an attempt to evade the ban on commercial handbills. Having seen this much, they might have concluded that any law so easily evaded probably has something seriously wrong with it. Moreover, since the First Amendment prohibits any abridgment of freedom of the press and Chrestensen's handbills looked to have come from a press, the Court might logically have held that New York had no business abridging them. But it didn't. Instead, the Court unanimously decided that New York could ban Chrestensen's purely commercial handbill because the First Amendment does not protect commercial communications at all, and the city could ban the second, commercial-plus-protest handbill because otherwise people could avoid bans on commercial advertising by the simple device of including "a civic appeal, or a moral platitude" in each ad.

The most peculiar thing about the Chrestensen case was the Court didn't bother to lay out the differences it saw

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between commercial speech and other kinds of speech or to explain why the First Amendment covered the other kinds but not the commercial. The First Amendment itself, which is after all the document the Supreme Court is supposed to be interpreting, doesn't say anything about commercial speech.

The nature of the legal beast is such that, if the Supreme Court fails to offer a reason for one of its decisions, the lawyers and the law professors will supply one after the event. So, over the years, several justifications have been offered for the commercial-speech doctrine.

There are more than a hundred scholarly treatments of this subject in print. Every one begins by proving that all prior attempts to define what "commercial speech" is and to give a good reason why it can be censored without violating the First Amendment are total failures. The great majority of them then go on to add still another failure to the list. The most common justifications derive from some notion of a hierarchy of communications: Stuff like religion, poetry, and the arts is right at the top, followed closely by politics (preferably termed "public affairs"), then science, then polite inanities, and (yuk) money brings up the rear. This, not coincidentally, was the scale of values a medieval knight was supposed to cherish, and even today there are families where money may not be discussed at the table and separate entrances are provided for tradesmen. Whatever the philosophical merits of this genteel view toward commerce, the men who wrote the Federalist Papers did not share it, and scholars or judges who do share it have no business imposing it on the rest of the country.

That forty years of legal scholarship has failed to produce an intellectually respectable definition of commercial speech is a problem that concerns only the law professors, since legal scholars don't get to decide cases. But judges have to, and having painted themselves into a corner with the Chrestensen decision, the Supreme Court justices condemned themselves and their successors to forty years of trying to make sense of an invisible distinction.

What does it take, for example, to make speech commercial? In *New York Times* v. *Sullivan*, the *Times* printed a paid advertisement soliciting funds for Martin Luther King in Alabama and, allegedly, libeling the city fathers of Montgomery, Alabama. The Supreme Court denied that the ad was commercial speech, even insofar as the *Times* was concerned, although the *Times*'s sole interest in the matter—getting paid—was as commercial as you can get. The Court did not even consider the possibility that Dr. King's own interest in the matter—raising money—could also be fairly termed "commercial," since few people are in commerce for any other purpose. In any event, the Court concluded that King's ad "expressed opinion, recited grievances, protested claimed abuses" and, therefore, it was noncommercial and hence qualified for First Amendment protection.

Forty years of legal scholarship has failed to produce an intellectually respectable definition of free speech.

That attempt at a definition of commercial speech really isn't as helpful as it sounds. Suppose we take the exact same ad, the same expression of opinions, the same recited grievances, the same everything, *except* that the folks at the address where you send the money aren't Dr. King's coworkers, but a couple of hustlers who plan to pocket the money and run. Bet it wouldn't be noncommercial then. Bet they'd clap those guys in jail quicker than you could say "fully protected."

WHILE WE'RE LOOKING for a noncommercial ad, how about this one:

UNWANTED PREGNANCY
LET US HELP YOU
Abortions are now legal in New York.

This appeared in the *Virginia Weekly* in 1971, when abortions were still illegal in Virginia. The ad, placed by a commercial abortion-referral agency, went on to promise strictly confidential, low-cost, seven-day-a-week service. At the time, Virginia had a law against advertising abortion services.

"Purely commercial," said Virginia's Supreme Court, adding that abortion-referral agencies had raked in millions in split fees before the State of New York finally banned them.

To hear the Supreme Court tell it, the same advertisement that struck the Virginia judges as obviously commercial was so noncommercial that it more properly belonged on the front page or with the editorials than in the ad columns:

> The advertisement conveyed information of potential interest and value to a diverse audience—not only to readers possibly in need of the services offered, but also to those with a general curiosity about, or genuine interest in, the subject matter or the law of another State and its development, and to readers seeking reform in Virginia.

With this decision in 1975, the jig was up. Practically every advertisement imaginable has something of interest "to those with a general curiosity." Chances are, poor Chrestensen's submarine was more remarkable in the New York of 1940 than was the presence of abortion clinics in New York to a 1970 Virginian.

After the abortion-referral case, it didn't take much to transmute—in the eyes of the judges at least—a clearly for-profit advertisement from commercial speech into something else. Since the only something else such things could be is plain old free speech, it paid lawyers to present a cleanser ad as an editorial on home hygiene or "hamburger $1.50/lb." as a commentary on inflation.

The law finally had become a parody of itself, and the Court was forced to do something. When a pharmacist demanded the right to advertise drug prices notwithstanding a state law against it, the Court conceded the whole thing was a sham:

> There are few [ads] to which [a public-interest] element could not be added. Our pharmacist, for example, could cast himself as a commentator on store-to-store disparities in drug prices, giving his own and those of a competitor as proof. We see little point in requiring him to do so, and little difference if he does not.

So the druggist was allowed to advertise his price for Ampicillin and, in 1976, the Supreme Court moved commercial speech inside the protection of

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the First Amendment.

But only slightly inside. What was supposed to cover commercial speech wasn't the real First Amendment, you see. Instead, the justices decreed, on the basis of "common sense," that commercial speech—whatever it might be—was not deserving of the full protection of the First Amendment. Instead, it would be protected by a lesser, more restricted version of the First Amendment than other kinds of speech. The general idea was that governments could no longer censor commercial speech at will, but they could abridge it in ways that would be considered unconstitutional if any other kind of speech were involved. The Court still didn't explain how to tell commercial speech from the other kind, though.

AND SO STOOD THE LAW when the Court seemed to eliminate the distinction between commercial and other speech in the lawyer's advertising case in January and then to resurrect the distinction in the Nevada brothel case in April, leaving the law in the condition lawyers are trained to call "uncertain" only because more accurate expressions—like "baloney" and "intellectual mush"—are not accepted legal terminology. All this matters because as long as there are commercial and noncommercial versions of the First Amendment on the books

—a town council can enact an ordinance forbidding people from putting "For Sale" and "Sold" signs in front of their own houses;

—the U.S. Supreme Court can void a municipal billboard ordinance on the grounds that the city council got the relationship between commercial speech and the other kind wrong; and

—the Nevada Supreme Court can invoke the commercial-speech doctrine to justify a ban on advertising that state's legal bordellos.

That's just a bit of the mischief that has found its way onto the Supreme Court's docket recently. Odds are, there's a good deal more that never got beyond the lower courts and even more that never got to any court. This kind of thing is likely to go on until the Supreme Court abandons the notion that the Constitution prefers some forms of communication over others and comes to accept that the First Amendment recognizes only one category of speech or press: free. ■

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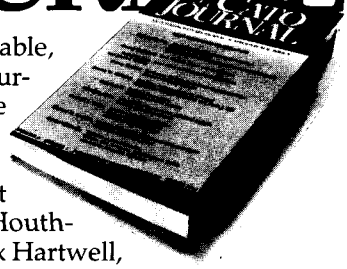

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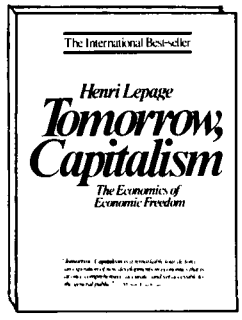

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by Henri Lepage

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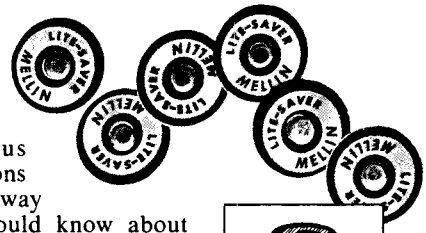
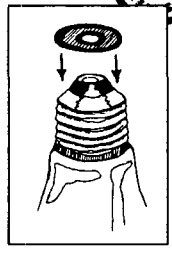
When *Tools for Living* originated eight years ago it was with the idea that complete information about our products would be the key to our success. We believed then, as we do now, that our readers wanted to learn everything they could about an item they were interested in buying. That's why we developed our editorial, often long-winded approach to mail order advertising. In this way you are better able to make your own judgments as to whether you like, want or need a particular item. We're always happy to answer any further questions you might have about our products. At *Tools for Living* we like to think we're a product information service as well as a dependable marketplace for unique, useful, fine quality products.

LITE-SAVERS

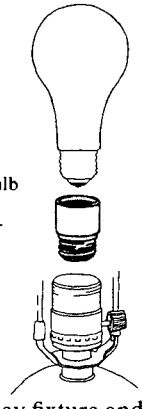


If you're tired of climbing ladders and getting into precarious (often dangerous) positions to change an out of the way light bulb then you should know about Mellin Lite-Savers. Adhered to the base of any *one way* bulb the Lite-Savers can extend bulb life from 50 to 100 times! Just think of the money saved in light bulbs! Most bulbs have a rated life of 750 hours or 32 days if used continuously. With Lite-Savers your bulbs will burn up to 75,000 hours or about eight years if used 24 hours a day. They're ideal for hallways, staircases, or anyplace where replacing light bulbs is a time consuming nuisance. You'll notice that Lite-Savers reduce light output so you may want to increase bulb wattage. They're safe, dependable and install quickly and easily with any one way bulb. The manufacturer offers a limited eight year warranty. We offer the Lite-Savers in a package of 6 for **$17.00** ($1.95) #A548 or 12 for **$27.00** ($2.95) #A549.



CONVERT-A-BULB

If your house is typical, you have at least two or three 3-way light fixtures. *Now you can save $15 per fixture when you next change the light!* Here's how.



The Convert-A-Bulb adds 1½" in height to your light bulb.

Three-way bulbs have some major shortcomings. They are noticeably more expensive than regular bulbs, and they come in a limited range of sizes and styles. Also, a 30-70-100 watt 3-way light at the highest setting gives you only 1285 lumens of light; a plain 100 watt bulb gives you 1740 lumens.

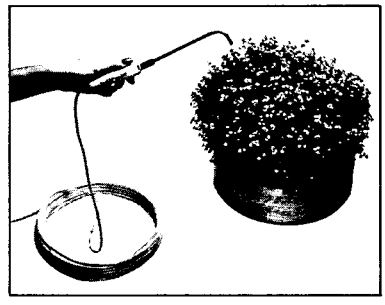
The Convert-A-Bulb simply screws into your 3-way fixture and enables you to have *3-way action from a less expensive regular lightbulb.* You can use any screw-in standard base bulb from 7½ to 150 watts in your 3-way lamp with no loss of function! You also gain bulb life; 2 times rated life at the high setting, 6 times at medium and 30 times at the low setting!

This is where it gets interesting. Let's assume you replace a 50-100-150 watt 3-way bulb with a regular 150 watt bulb. What do you save? First, because of the lumen differential between regular and 3-way bulbs, you now get at the medium setting the same amount of light you formerly had at the high setting—a savings of 27 watts per hour. Now the regular bulb at medium setting will last 6 times its rated life of 750 hours, or a total of 4500 hours. The total savings is 121½ kwh. At 7¢ per kwh for electricity you save $8.50. Plus this; 3-way bulbs are usually rated at 1200 hours, so you'd need four of them at $2.20 each to outlast this one regular bulb, at $1.50. That's another $7.30 savings for an overall windfall of $15.80 over the life of *the first bulb alone!* The Convert-A-Bulb is U.L. listed. Buy one for **$9.00** ($1.95) #A495, two for **$17.00** ($1.95) #A496 or three for **$25.00** ($2.95) #A497.

ATTRACT DUST LIKE A MAGNET!

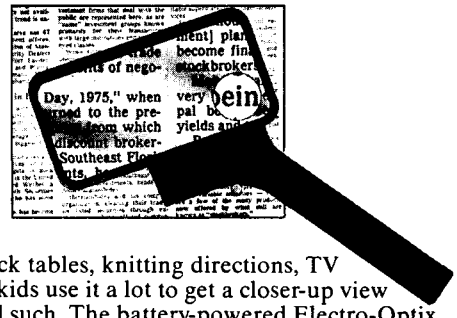
If we ever compile a book on *The Old Ways That Were Better Ways,* we will certainly include a chapter on the lambswool duster. This remarkable implement originated, the best we can tell, in 19th-century England where it quickly put the feather-duster to shame. On its own it actually attracts and holds dust like a magnet. The static charge in the lambswool causes dust literally to leap off surfaces where it has accumulated, making this just the thing for dusting bric-a-brac, china, crystal, pictures and other fragile items. When soiled, just wash it in warm soapy water. Let it dry, fluff it out and store it, hanging from a conveniently located hole at the end of its handle. We are happy to offer a 20" authentic lambswool duster for **$8.00** ($1.95) #A163.

BAN THE BUCKET BRIGADE!

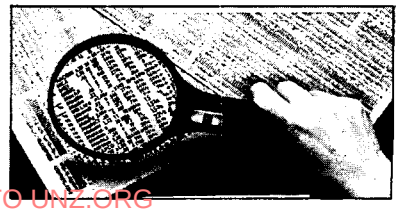


Do your houseplants run you ragged, back and forth, trip after trip, watering can in hand? There *is* an easier way: with an indoor garden hose you can water them all in a single trip. Think of the steps waiting to be saved! This 50' (that is a *lot* of reach) vinyl hose readily attaches to any household faucet. From there you just take the water where you want it—an easy-control handle allows you to turn a splashless stream of water on and off as needed. This indoor hose comes with a snap-in misting attachment, so after you water the roots you can spray the foliage and wash away the dust accumulation that impairs a plant's health as well as its beauty. The complete indoor garden hose kit costs just **$11.00** ($1.95) #A341.

CONQUER FINE PRINT



The best way to beat fine print is to blow it up—with an illuminated magnifier. We keep ours near the telephone and use it for the phone book, medicine labels, dictionaries, classified ads, stock tables, knitting directions, TV listings and maps. The kids use it a lot to get a closer-up view of bugs and flowers and such. The battery-powered Electro-Optix magnifiers are American-made with a 2½-power optical-grade plastic lens with a 5-power insert bifocal eye. The lenses are distortion free, water clear and shatterproof. We have these lighted magnifiers in two models—round, 4" diameter, 9 oz., using two "C" batteries for **$18.00** ($1.95) #A550; or rectangular, 2" x 4" reversible for either hand, 5 oz. using two "AA" batteries for **$16.00** ($1.95) #A551. Or buy both together for the special price of **$32.00** ($2.95) #A552 and put the smaller one in the car for map-reading.



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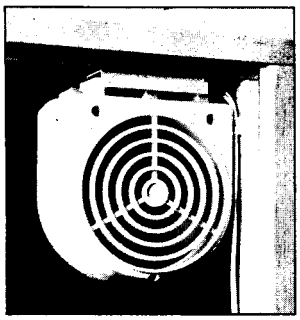
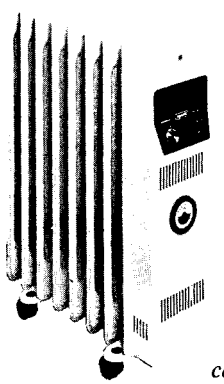


A FAN FOR ALL SEASONS

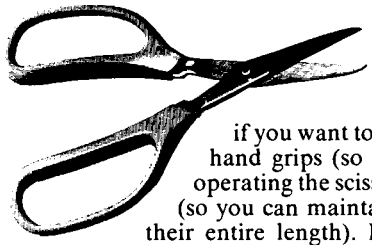
Have you ever noticed how one room can be chilly while the very next room tends to be warm? You don't have to put up with such discomfort once you've installed the Con-Serv room-to-room temperature balancing fan. This little fan mounts high in the frame of a doorway (it tucks unobtrusively on the outer side so the door can be closed) and directs and balances the air flow. Since warm air tends to rise to the ceiling, it makes good sense to have a fan up there. And since it's reversible you can use it all year-round . . . recirculating the warm air down into the room during the winter months, moving cool air-conditioned air more efficiently in summertime. It can actually help save quite a few dollars on the costs of heating and cooling as you stay comfortable without having to adjust the thermostat. The Con-Serv temperature balancing fan has a 110-volt motor with a 10-foot cord and an in-line switch. It's quite easy to mount and comes with a mounting bracket, screws, clips and complete instructions. It weighs a mere 2 lb. 3 oz. and measures 5½″ × 5″ × 3½″. **$28.00** ($3.95) #A397.

A SPACE-AGE SPACE HEATER



Most of us have turned back our thermostats in favor of saving energy and money. But on chilly mornings we really pay the price for our conservation efforts. If you own a portable radiator with an *automatic timer* you can keep your central heat down while still maintaining room comfort—24 hours a day! Such a heater is the DeLonghi, made in Europe where they've known for years that it makes sense to heat only space being occupied. *You can program this portable heater to go on and off in 15 minute intervals day or night.* For example, set it to go off a few minutes before you wake in the morning so your bathroom or bedroom has started to warm before you get up!

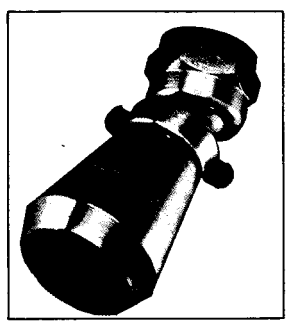
The DeLonghi is permanently filled with a special diathermic oil that never needs replacing. It heats up quickly and cools slowly, radiating heat long after shutting off. The unit has three heat settings (600w, 900w and 1,500w) and provides a maximum of 5,100 BTUs at the highest setting. A built-in thermostat responds to room temperature, automatically shutting off when the room has reached your comfort level, automatically turning on again as the room cools. Chief among its many virtues is safety. Where many heaters operate at extremely high temperatures, the DeLonghi never gets dangerously hot, making it perfect for a child's bedroom or playroom. This unit has 4 wide base wheels for complete portability and eight heat fins. The DeLonghi is all-steel construction with a baked-on enamel finish in a neutral oyster color. It's 18″x8″x25″, weighs 38 lbs. and is UL listed. This model with automatic timer is not generally available in stores and costs **$150.00** ($12.95) #A485. An identical model without the timer is made by DeLonghi and available through us for **$140.00** (12.95) #A487.



SENSIBLE SCISSORS

Most scissors are built backwards, with long blades and tiny handles. But if you want to exert leverage, you need large hand grips (so more of your hand goes into operating the scissor) and relatively short blades (so you can maintain full cutting pressure along their entire length). Finally a pair of scissors has come along reflecting these basic physical facts. The generously large flexible plastic handles accommodate most of your hand (4 fingers of a man's hand) and fit a right or lefthanded person equally well. The blades are made of high carbon tool steel (for sharpness and strength) and are chrome finished (for protection from staining). These scissor blades are so sharp that they bite right into whatever you are cutting. They are marketed primarily as gourmet kitchenware and they are superb in that role. The tapered points let you get into small places cutting chicken, fish, lobster shells, small bones and so forth. But these scissors are much too sensible and flexible to be confined to the kitchen. They are equally at home in the workshop, garden, office or hobby center where they cut rubber, plastic, cardboard, wire, flower stems, leather, cloth and other materials. We can supply these Joyce Chen scissors for **$13.00** ($1.95) #A411 a pair.

SAVINGS IN THE SHOWER



Tools for Living has discovered a finely crafted shower head called the Deluxe Fuel Saver manufactured by Con-Serv, which cuts the use of water—*hot water*—in the shower from 5 or 8 to 2.45 gallons per minute. Remember, heating water throughout the year is second only to the cost of heating the house. With the conventional shower head, the average family of four uses 300 to 400 gals. of water—much of it heated—every day. According to U.S. Department of Energy figures, with the Deluxe Fuel Saver that same family uses 70% less water in the shower and realizes a savings of between $150 and $350 depending on the utility rates. Con-Serv designed the new Deluxe Fuel Saver without compromising comfort or high quality. Although the amount of water is significantly reduced, it is aerated and accelerated—utilizing the Venturi principle—for an invigorating shower. It delivers a comfortable yet forceful spray—forceful enough to quickly rinse shampoo suds out of a long, thick mane of hair. The Deluxe Fuel Saver also offers a "trickle valve" that allows you to stop water flow while soaping up. Made of chrome-plated solid brass, the Deluxe Fuel Saver is accompanied by a one-year limited warranty. It installs easily over the standard ½″ shower head arm with pliers or a wrench—no plumber is needed. We offer the Con-Serv Deluxe Fuel Saver for **$16.00** ($2.95) #A351.

ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS AND GUARANTEE: We ship via United Parcel Service wherever possible to insure prompt delivery. The cost of each item is shown followed by its shipping and handling charges in ( ). Be sure to add the cost **plus** shipping and handling charges for each item ordered to arrive at the **total price** of each item. If you are not satisfied for any reason, return the article to us within 30 days, and we'll exchange it or refund the cost, per your instructions.

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Politics

Resisting Reagan's draft

DAN HAGEN

ANONYMOUS PATRIOTS tell Benjamin Sasway he's a coward. They fill his mailbox with unsigned letters and rattle his phone off the hook with hateful calls. Some of them suggest that even five years in prison and a $10,000 fine isn't punishment enough for a guy who refuses to register for the draft. One caller threatened to burn down his parents' house in Vista, California. "So far they're delinquent on those threats," the twenty-one-year-old Humboldt State University student said.

Some 675,000 young men have failed to register for the draft. The Justice Department, in an attempt to enforce the law, has begun prosecuting nonregistrants. The first of a half-dozen indictments went to Sasway, making him the first American indicted for draft law violation since 1975. Because the number of nonregistrants is twenty times greater than the entire federal prison population, the government can't hope to imprison all the Sasways. But the Selective Service System predicts that the example of indictments and prosecutions will bring more young men in to register. Ben Sasway is to serve as part of that example.

"I can't allow myself to respond to fear," Sasway said. "That's what the administration is betting on—that they can scare us into doing something that's wrong.

"I think they pick twenty-one-year-olds or eighteen-year-olds because they can buffalo them. These are people that really don't have an active franchise. They don't vote. They're not involved. They don't have money to buy their way in and out of situations. So that appears to me to be a free license to push them around."

DAN HAGEN is a reporter and news editor with the Charleston, Illinois, Times-Courier.

But Sasway is one who's passionately pushing back. "Frankly, I don't think it makes any sense to guard against oppression and slavery from the outside by oppressing and enslaving our own people.

"I felt obligated to protest a spirit of militarism that I feel is responsible for the arms race, military intervention in Third World countries, and for conscription.

"And, moreover, I think that this is an important decision—to kill or not to kill. It's a fundamental decision that we ought to have the freedom to make. We can't defer a decision of this importance to a government, any government.

"I don't want to be a hero," he said. "I don't care if I'm the first one to be prosecuted or the hundredth one. I just want to do what I think is right, and to try to make as big a dent as possible in the system."

Hero worship irritates Sasway. He has little patience with any form of pack behavior. "If it's an alligator on your shirt now that you're supposed to wear, I'll go out of my way not to wear it. I won't see *E.T.* until it's three years old."

Since his indictment June 30, Sasway has been swamped with requests for interviews and personal appearances. If he didn't feel he had to help the cause, he'd vanish into the Sierras with a backpack for a while and he'd be likely to take a book along: "I got a great deal of mental support from writers like Thoreau and Martin Luther King—people who preached that it was possible to break a law and be true to your conscience.

"It's something that's always been a a part of me. I can't remember when I wasn't, in this sense, a radical—a person who's willing to go that extra distance and force a confrontation between me and what I consider to be the oppressors." Sasway paused, then added apologetically, "I don't know if I can say that without sounding inflammatory."

Sasway is unimpressed by the claim that the volunteer army is inadequate. "It's absolute crap, I think. I'm skeptical of whether we actually need the numbers they say we need. And we have all the numbers that they say we need, so there is absolutely no reason at all for a draft."

But defense isn't the only argument some make for a new draft. In order to eliminate the "inequalities" of the volunteer army, some liberals are calling for universal conscription with an alternative-service option. "There are grave social injustices involved in the military system," Sasway said. "But it doesn't make any sense to me to heap more injustice on top of injustice by forcing people into a system against their will. Furthermore, blacks and chicanos died twice the number of their representation in the country in Vietnam—when there was a draft."

The Carter and Reagan administrations reinstated draft registration because they wanted to send a message to the world, he said. "It's an armor-clanging device. It's saying, 'We're going to enforce our chauvinistic will throughout the world. We're going to get what we want, even if that happens to violate our charter as a country.'

"The administration is really in a bind. They can't turn me loose because then nobody will register. And they can't throw me in jail for a long time—because public outrage would just create political havoc."

Meanwhile, the letters pile up in Vista. Sasway is encouraged by a Chicago veteran who writes that he went to Vietnam to serve God and country, and finished by throwing away his fourteen medals. The personal attacks don't bother Sasway much. Everybody's entitled to an opinion. "But it kind of irritates me to have people call me a coward and then refuse to give me their names.

"I don't happen to think I'm that big a coward. I don't think I'm a Superman, but I don't think I'm a coward." ■

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Politics

Russia's African flop

JONATHAN MARSHALL

ONCE UPON A TIME, ACcording to a popular myth, the United States was strong and determined enough to impose its will on the world, aside from a few minor setbacks like the fall of China, the stalemate in Korea, and the neutralization of India and much of the Third World. Then came our defeat in Vietnam, the post-Vietnam syndrome, and worst of all, Jimmy Carter. While President Carter fiddled, Iran, Nicaragua, and Afghanistan burned. And as America retreated from world leadership, the Soviet Union moved in to fill the vacuum. This supposed shift in the balance of power was precisely what candidate Ronald Reagan pledged during his 1980 campaign to correct.

Until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, critics of the Carter administration—both Republicans and neoconservative Democrats—invariably seized upon Africa for proof that Soviet imperialism was marching invincibly against U.S. interests. While a post-Vietnam America agonized, they claimed, African nations were falling like dominoes into the Soviet orbit. Military strategists and popular news magazines alike spoke darkly of the peril to our sea lanes and our supplies of vital raw materials, and drew arrows and red blotches to show the thrust of the Soviet Union's advance along an "arc of crisis" from southern Africa to southwest Asia.

Republican politicians led this barrage of criticism. Senator S. I. Hayakawa of California, then the ranking minority member of the Subcommittee on African Affairs, stated the case most starkly in 1979. "We have been completely permissive in letting the Soviets do whatever they damn please all around Africa," he complained. "This is what has necessitated the end to a bipartisan foreign policy. As Americans and Republicans we are not content to see the permissive attitude this administration has shown toward Soviet adventurism in Africa." Robert Dole chimed in with his opinion that "the Soviet Union appears to have selected the African continent as a staging ground for a strategic showdown, to test the will of the United States." Thanks to Carter's inaction, or so Gerald Ford told the South African Foreign Trade Organization in 1978, the Soviets were fighting an "undeclared war" for control of Africa, and would "take over every nation if given the opportunity." Henry Kissinger, always the devotee of linkage theory, advised that the United States had lost influence in the Middle East because we failed to halt the "Soviet march through Africa." The Republican platform in 1980 registered its "strong opposition to the effort of the Soviet Union and its militant allies to subvert" the continent, and Ronald Reagan proposed as a first step that the United States send arms to antigovernment guerrillas in leftist Angola.

Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, Henry Kissinger—they are all respected and experienced statesmen. Their warnings had all the more impact because key figures in the Carter administration accepted their basic premises. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter's national security adviser, urged a tough line on Africa and would later accuse the Soviets of "burying" SALT "in the sands of the Ogaden." And Carter's number-two man at the CIA, Frank Carlucci (who would become deputy defense secretary under Reagan), told a Senate subcommittee in 1978 that "We are witnessing the most determined campaign to expand foreign influence in this troubled region since it was carved up by the European powers in the late nineteenth century."

Strong rhetoric, indeed. If such talk, by virtue of its sheer volume, had any real substance, then one would expect the Soviets to be masters by now of the entire African continent. But several years have passed since the height of the scare, and now we can see just how little ground the Soviets have gained, despite U.S. indecision and congressionally enforced nonintervention. A clearheaded look at the realities of African politics shows without a doubt that the Soviets have suffered one setback after another, the result on the one hand of their own stupidity, greed, and heavy-handedness, and on the other, of tenacious African nationalism. A conspicuously negligible factor in the Soviets' fall from grace was U.S. military intervention; rather, the lure of American trade and investment has drawn African nations to us far more effectively than the big stick.

Some of the Soviet Union's most abject failures are already well known. After they lavished aid on Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana and established at Accra the KGB's African headquarters, a military coup in 1966 sent Nkrumah packing and reestablished friendly relations with the West. In Somalia, strongman Siad Barre lost his ardor for the Soviets when they opposed his unprovoked invasion of Ethiopia. Seemingly ungrateful for the more than $1 billion in weapons and technical assistance the Soviets had lavished on Somalia, Barre kicked them out of Berbera, the finest naval base they enjoyed in Africa. Most notorious of all is the case of Egypt. The late president Anwar Sadat signed a friendship treaty with the Soviets in 1971 (after first imprisoning the pro-Soviet wing of Egypt's political leadership), then expelled 20,000 Soviet advisers fourteen months later, and in 1976 abrogated the treaty of friendship. Later he turned his military facilities over to the United States for dry runs of the Rapid Deployment Force.

Throughout Africa, the Soviets suffered less spectacular, but no less significant, political defeats. Guinea was long one of the Soviets' choicest allies in West Africa; since 1958 that terribly poor country received more than $150 million in Soviet aid, over twice what the West has given. Nonetheless, the Soviets never had an easy time of it there. In 1961, for example, Guinea threw out all Soviet and Eastern-bloc diplomats, then denied the Soviets permission to land planes en route to Cuba during the 1962 missile crisis. Guinea fully opened up to the Soviet Union again only in 1973, when the

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Soviets promised them protection against Portuguese raids originating in the colony of Guinea-Bissau.* Guinea's decision to allow the Soviets limited use of Conakry airport for naval reconnaissance earned it a pro-Soviet label. But Guinea also quietly permitted U.S. warships to dock at its ports, showing that it had not irreversibly chosen sides. Then, in September 1977, President Sekou Touré suddenly cancelled Soviet air rights, denied their requests for a naval base, turned down a personal invitation to meet Leonid Brezhnev in Moscow, and thumbed his nose when Cuba asked to use his airport to ferry troops into Africa. Guineans still recall the time in the mid-1960s when the Soviets delivered snowplows and antifreeze in their aid packages to the tropical country, and they complain that the Soviets smuggle diamonds via diplomatic pouch and pay a miserly price for Guinean bauxite—less than half the world price, and in unconvertible rubles at that. "The Soviets are more capitalist than the capitalists," President Touré once complained. Now he hobnobs regularly with the French and even with the right-wing Moroccan monarchy. Eleven American companies are busily working the country's fabulously rich bauxite, oil, and diamond reserves, and another seventy American companies recently heard Touré make a pitch for private foreign investment at a New York conference organized by Chase Manhattan bank.

WHAT ABOUT ALL THOSE countries that still proclaim themselves "Marxist-Leninist" and invite in hordes of Soviet and Cuban advisers? Unfortunately for the Russians, they have been unable to translate aid and advice into a significant military foothold.

Take Ethiopia, for instance, where the Marxist ruling group, the Derg, threw Americans out of our spy bases, and then invited Soviet advisers and 13,000 Cuban troops to help repel an unprovoked attack from another Soviet ally, Somalia. The Soviets gave up excellent bases in Somalia on the Red Sea and Indian Ocean in their gamble to win over Ethiopia. After pouring more than $2 billion in military aid into Ethiopia over the last four years, what have the Soviets gained?

So far, they enjoy nothing like the enormous base at Asmara or the other facilities granted to the United States under Emperor Haile Selassie. They do have a twenty-year treaty of friendship and cooperation, which, like the one they signed with Sadat, can be revoked by the Derg at any time. More concretely, they have access to docking facilities on the tiny and undeveloped Dahlak Islands in the Red Sea. However, despite American support for Ethiopia's aggressive neighbor, Somalia, the Ethiopians have so far resisted Soviet requests for better shore facilities or air bases. "There is no such thing like a facility or base inside Ethiopia for the use of the Soviets," said Ethiopia's former special envoy to North and South America, Major Dawit Wolde-Giogis. "We don't want to be trapped in this East-West business and lose our independence."

Ethiopia shows growing signs of discomfort with the Eastern-bloc presence. "Everything has been turned upside down," said one senior civil servant quoted by the *Washington Post*. Now that Ethiopia has a friendship pact with the Soviet Union, "the Russians are hated, just like the Americans were hated when they were here. Now the Americans are popular." Irritation with the Soviets is nearly as widespread in official circles as it is among the citizenry. In late 1981 the Ethiopian government sent the Soviet ambassador packing, reportedly because his style was unacceptably condescending. Ethiopian officials cite a long list of complaints: Moscow's stinginess with new aid and its reluctance to sign a long-term oil contract on preferential terms; the poor durability of Soviet military equipment and the Soviets' unwillingness to train Ethiopian technicians in the latest military repair methods; and the unscrupulousness of Eastern-bloc firms that try to dump their shoddy goods at outrageously inflated prices. The *Washington Post* reports a case in which an East German firm beat out South Korea on an order for military uniforms, on the basis of ideology and friendship, then bought the uniforms from South Korea and sold them to Ethiopia for three times the price.

Said Ethiopia's special ambassador to North and South America, "We don't want to be trapped in this East-West business and lose our independence."

A final, and important, source of friction has been the unwillingness of the Cubans to lend all-out support for the Derg's battle against Eritrean separatists in the north. The Cubans refuse to commit their troops to the fight and have sought to mediate between the two sides. Such supposedly pro-Soviet countries as Algeria, Angola, and Mozambique openly support the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, the main guerrilla group fighting the Derg.

Years of unstinting support for independence movements in Portuguese Africa have brought the Soviets no greater gains. The leaders of these new nations, however grateful for the aid (and hostile to Western backers of Portuguese colonialism), have consistently declined to make concessions that might undermine their jealously guarded independence. In Guinea-Bissau, for example, the ruling party has long affirmed its policy of "strict nonalignment" and has publicly said that to permit foreign military bases on its soil would be "suicide." In October 1980 its leaders rebuffed a Soviet

*Guinea and Guinea-Bissau are not to be confused with Equatorial Guinea, once the most barbaric hellhole in Africa. A few years ago the bloodthirsty regime of voodoo-cultist President Macias killed more than 10 percent of Equatorial Guinea's population, forced 30 percent into exile, and reduced most of the rest to slavery. However, a coup in 1979 replaced the Soviet-backed Macias with pro-Spanish leaders. The Soviets were roundly disliked for their greedy exploitation of offshore fisheries; as one minister complained, "They leave us with only a few sardines." They have now lost their once-privileged access to coastal waters. The new president, protected by Moroccan bodyguards, has recently approved a petroleum law, written by World Bank officials, opening the country's oil reserves to foreign companies on liberal terms.

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request for naval facilitites on the strategic Cape Verde islands. One month later a coup brought to power a new ruler described by official Lisbon sources as "more an African socialist than a Marxist."

Guinea-Bissau is nothing if not pragmatic. It has restored close relations with Portugal, and has even turned over the training of its armed forces to its former colonial master. It sends observers to annual Franco-African summits—and generally has avoided criticizing French military interventions in Africa—because it needs French credits to develop its industrial base. It dickers for loans from such bastions of anticommunism as Brazil, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. Its relations with the Soviet Union have cooled as it has caught on to the rapaciousness with which Soviet trawlers have cleaned out its fisheries; its relations with the United States have warmed since we stepped forward as its largest supplier of food and foreign aid.

THE SOVIET UNION HAS done a bit better, perhaps, in Mozambique, which at least permits Soviet warships to call at its ports. East German specialists have moved in to train the secret police (the law of comparative advantage at work?), while Cubans have come as doctors, teachers, agricultural specialists, and military advisers.

But aside from some favorable votes in the United Nations, the Soviets have gained little of political or military significance. Mozambique still denies them bases and military facilities. Economic advantage, however, is a different matter. The vast Soviet fishing fleet methodically cleans everything out of the water and gives Mozambique only 25 percent of the catch. The Soviets exchange trucks and other equipment for agricultural produce, which they sell on world markets, sharing none of the foreign exchange. Mozambique was even looted of millions of dollars in foreign exchange by the local Aeroflot office, which illegally sold discount tickets in the capital. The government shut down the airline in 1977 and expelled its representatives from the country.

This sort of mercenary behavior doesn't exactly endear the Soviets to their allies in Mozambique, although the African nation will put up with a lot of discomfort as long as South Africa continues to back opposition guerrilla groups. Mozambique considers Soviet support indispensable for maintaining its security, but it can also see that Britain and Sweden are its largest aid donors, not the Soviets; that the USSR ranks far below the United States and Portugal as importers of goods from Mozambique; and that capital for development is available only from the West, not the East. President Samora Machel visited Jimmy Carter in 1977 and declared a "new era" in relations with the United States, then sat down with U.S. business executives to attract foreign investment to his country. Mozambique honored a preindependence commitment to sponsor a $32.5 million tire factory with General Tire and Rubber. In Mozambique, as in Guinea-Bissau, pragmatism comes first.

When conservatives point to Soviet gains in Africa, they always rank Angola as one of the West's greatest defeats. After all, even the most confirmed Soviet apologist has a hard time explaining away the presence of 20,000 or so Cuban troops in the country. Robert Moss, correspondent for the conservative London *Daily Telegraph*, and darling of the South African Department of Information, which reprinted his article on "Moscow's Next Target in Africa" in major Western newspapers, put the case most bluntly. "The communist invasion of Angola," he wrote in 1977, "was a step toward the fulfillment of Russian's grand design: the domination of the whole of southern Africa."

But those Cuban troops in Angola seem to spend more time fending off raids by South African–backed UNITA guerrillas within Angola itself than in pressing forward with grandiose plans to revolutionize all of southern Africa. And, at least through 1978, some 2000 of those Cubans had the unlikely task of defending profitable Gulf Oil installations against attacks by French-backed FLEC guerrillas. Gulf's colonial-era fields, which produce for Western markets, bring in more than $300 million in annual revenues to the Angolan government, and a nearly equal amount for Gulf. No wonder then that Gulf has called its relations with the regime "excellent," or that other American companies, including Boeing, Mobil, Texaco, Cities Service, and NCR, do business there, even though the United States still refuses to extend diplomatic recognition to the regime. All this fraternizing with the capitalists, rationalized the late president Agostinho Neto in December 1978, "did not necessarily clash with the revolutionary principles of the [ruling] MPLA."

Neto's successor, José Eduardo dos Santos, follows the same independent line. Like Neto, he encourages Western investment, and in fact was one of the negotiators who brought Texaco into Angola in 1979 to begin oil exploration. Among the moderates who won promotions when dos Santos took power were the men who engineered Angola's rapprochement with conservative Zaire, and the foreign trade minister who negotiated the establishment of diplomatic relations with West Germany, much to the dismay of the East Germans and Soviets.

"It's difficult to find a single government official who is happy with the Russians," said one Western ambassador in Luanda. "Everyone knows the country is going to hell."

Angola's encouragement of American corporations reflects their sincere desire to avoid excessive reliance on the Soviet Union. The results of past dependence have been most unhappy. Angola must pay for housing its 5000 Soviet civilian and military advisers, pay for all the weapons supplied by the USSR, provide salaries for each of its Cuban teachers, and give the Soviets 75 percent of its fishing catch. Needless to say, the Soviets don't believe in charity. Nor do they like mixing with blacks; they have their own reserved beach near Luanda, for example. "It's difficult to find a single government official who is happy with the Russians," said a Western ambassador in Luanda quoted by the *Los Angeles Times*. "Everyone knows the country is

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going to hell in a handbasket, and they look around and about all they can see the Russians doing is handing out guns and pictures of Marx and Lenin."

In Robert Moss's 1977 scenario for the Soviet takeover of southern Africa, Rhodesia was to be the next target after the fall of Angola. Sure enough, the Patriotic Front, led by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo, took power some three years after Moss penned his article. The Soviets, however, made two fatal misjudgments. First, they gambled everything on the losing candidate, Nkomo, and ignored Mugabe's pleas for aid. Second, they forgot that Mugabe, like most politicians, didn't put much weight on promises. For all his Stalinist rhetoric during the revolution, Mugabe now acts, by African standards, like a moderate, restraining the firebrands who would run the whites out of the country.

Mugabe didn't like it that the Soviets gave military aid to his political rivals. So he snubbed Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Leonid Ilichev who asked to visit Zimbabwe before the independence ceremonies took place. Then, when the celebration time did roll around, Mugabe pointedly didn't invite East Germany, Poland, Hungary, or Czechoslovakia, and let it be known that he invited the Soviets only because they were a great power. On the other hand, Averell Harriman and Andrew Young were on hand to sing the praises of Zimbabwe's new prime minister. Only recently has Zimbabwe even accepted a Soviet ambassador in the country.

Zimbabwe's economic ties are overwhelmingly with the West. In order to cement those ties, the European Economic Community granted Zimbabwe "overseas territory" status, dropping tariff barriers on most of its exports. Reconstruction aid has come mostly from Great Britain and the United States. Finally, Zimbabwe depends heavily on South Africa for rail access to ports for its mineral and agricultural exports, and for imports of food so long as its farms suffer the effects of war and drought.

IF THE SOVIETS EVER HAD A master plan for taking over Africa, or for establishing a network of naval and air bases that could control sea lanes in the Indian and Atlantic oceans, they must now be sadly disillusioned. Decades of patient diplomacy, arms deals, and proxy interventions have left them with fewer reliable friends than ever. The billions of dollars they have sunk into revolutionary causes have at best won them kind words, friendship treaties, and a few lucrative business deals, and at worst have been turned against them, as in Egypt and Somalia. Even in countries that welcome Cuban and East German advisers, African leaders have invariably shown a healthy skepticism and a growing contempt for the racist and greedy style of Soviet foreign policy.

If the Soviets ever had a master plan for taking over Africa, they must now be sadly disillusioned.

It may not be much consolation for the average citizen of Mozambique or Ethiopia, living in terror of an East German–trained secret police, to know that his government is not as blindly pro-Soviet as he thought. For that matter, it can hardly comfort the citizen of Zaire, living under the brutal Mobutu tyranny, to know that his government has friends in the freedom-loving West. But as a matter of pure state politics, it is clear that America must abandon the simplistic assumptions of the East-West power game if it is to develop wiser policies toward Africa. The Brzezinskis and Kissingers of the world (including, no doubt, their Soviet counterparts) ignore the subtleties of African politics; instead they fall back on a more familiar view of the world shaped by the Cold War. In doing so, they disregard the astonishing ironies of the African scene that make a mockery of outmoded clichés.

Thus we have had Cuban troops in Angola defending an American oil company, Gulf, against guerrillas backed by the French intelligence agency SDECE and the French oil company Elf. Western-backed UNITA guerrillas in Angola have blocked the rail transport of Zaire's ore exports, so vital to the Western economies and to the financial stability of that American ally. The British and Israeli governments fomented Idi Amin's coup against the Soviet-backed Obote regime in Uganda, only to have Amin turn on his friends and make up to the Soviets, then be deposed in turn and eventually replaced by Obote. The Soviets mercilessly looted the fisheries of their African friends and defrauded the governments of Ethiopia and Mozambique, even as they broke sanctions in Rhodesia, undermined SWAPO's guerrilla movement by enriching Namibian uranium for West Germany and the shah of Iran, and conducted secret business deals with South Africa over gold and diamonds. Then, too, pro-Soviet Angola, Algeria, and Guinea-Bissau have abetted the traffic in Namibian uranium, in violation of UN sanctions. And of course virtually every revolutionary state in Africa trades extensively with South Africa—to the point where, until recently, 40 percent of Marxist Mozambique's imports came from that bastion of apartheid.

These realities of African nationalism and pragmatism are what count, not the public rhetoric or labels like "pro-Soviet." Even the epithet "Marxist" is of little meaning in a continent where freedom of any sort, much less economic liberty, is largely unknown. To the extent that the Soviets do have a foothold in Africa, it is frequently because the West gave the emerging nations nowhere else to turn. But the Soviets are rapidly proving to inhabitants of that continent that they are the new imperialists, that they are no better—and sometimes worse—than the old colonial masters. The United States would do well, therefore, to keep open its lines of communication to countries like Angola, as it has in Zimbabwe, instead of writing them off. A knee-jerk reaction against countries that accept Soviet aid may only push them, unwillingly, further into the Soviet fold. We need not play the superpower game of competing all over Africa with aid, arms, and covert intervention. By avoiding condemnation, and maintaining a sensible course of trade and diplomatic relations with all, the United States stands its best chance of keeping Africa free of Soviet military bases and Cold War rivalry. ■

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Getting the Government out of the Environment

by Robert J. Smith

Imagine . . . the Grand Canyon turned into a big ditch for Du Pont's effluent . . . Yellowstone's geysers harnessed to Con Edison's turbine generators . . . Yosemite Valley hosting a new blast furnace for U.S. Steel. Is that the vision behind the administration's plan for privatization of the public lands? It is certainly the Sierra Club's darkest nightmare, and to many Americans it is an image of what private ownership would do to the last unspoiled wonders of our continent—turn them into one vast industrial park. But private owners can protect as well as destroy, and if the recent history of public land management is any indication, our nation's environment would fare better in private hands than under the negligent direction of Washington officials, who answer more to the needs of politics than to the long-run interests of the America people.

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DON WELLER

Few people doubt that America's natural heritage, its abundant natural resources, could be best developed through private ownership, but most have traditionally believed that only the government can protect it.

However, a small group of free-market environmentalists are beginning to popularize the superiority of private ownership of land and resources for conservation as well as development.

Perhaps the most compelling argument for private ownership is that it would remove resource-management decisions from the realm of politics. Surely, people on both sides of the so-called "preservation vs. development" debate can agree that there must be a better way to manage scarce resources than subjecting them to the vagaries of the political tides with every change of administration. Just as Interior Secretary James Watt changed the direction of the buffalo on his department's official seal from face-left to face-right, so can each succeeding administration reverse the policies of its predecessor. If the goal of environmentalists is the careful use, management, and conservation of our unique natural resources, then they should seek to bypass the never-ending tug-of-war for political power to achieve this goal. As free-market environmentalist John Baden of Montana State University has asked: Would environmentalists be more sanguine about prospects for wilderness areas and parks if they were managed by such private organizations as the Wilderness Society or the National Audubon Society, or by the Interior Department under Secretary Watt?

For all its talk about private ownership of resources, the Reagan administration's approach to this issue has been remarkably clumsy and counterproductive. The administration has promoted the idea as a *budgetary* concept—selling off "surplus" lands to generate a few billion dollars to help offset the expected enormous federal budget deficits.

This approach has done nothing to promote the idea that lands and resources would be more wisely managed to protect wildlife, timber, grazing, wilderness, and water under private ownership than under government ownership and a system of managed common property. It has done nothing to help show that the long-term interests of private owners of the resources would be more oriented toward preserving these resources for future generations than are the short-run time horizons of politicians and bureaucrats.

It also has played into the hands of critics of the free market by advancing the idea that even this limited program and its supporters are antienvironmental and only interested in auctioning off the nation's heritage to big business and the wealthy. The very language and arguments used by the administration and its ideological supporters in this debate have served to convince the hostile media, people in the environmental movement, and a skeptical and unknowledgeable public that privatization is merely a thinly veiled guise for further destruction and abuse of the public domain. A major article in the *New York Times* on July 3, 1982, by Philip Shabecoff quotes James Watt's belief that public lands will be more productive under private ownership. "A sheep pasture will become an industrial site, desert lands will be used for hotels and resorts. . . ."

One could not imagine a statement more likely to rally environmentalists as well as such traditional users of the public domain as sheep and cattle graziers and timber cutters into a potent opposition coalition. Shabecoff wrote that the critics claim that the administration's policy "will result in the sale of the legacy of future generations of Americans for short-term economic and political gain" and that they "complain that the government's plans ignore uses and values other than development, such as watershed protection, recreation, wildlife protection, maintenance of biological diversity and the beauty and solitude of natural areas." But the purpose of privatization, properly understood, is to protect those very environmental amenities from the overuse, abuse, and constantly changing and uncertain management to which they have been subjected under the system of public or common property.

Ironically, among the environmentalists' most powerful allies on this issue are often business interests, such as timber owners, that have no desire to upset the status quo. Government ownership and management of lands and resources often effectively subsidize those businesses that are permitted to use them, and protects businesses from competition when no access is allowed. This seemingly odd environmentalist-corporate coalition has prospered, with the environmentalist movement, aided by huge corporate subsidies and grants, surviving and growing.

The concept of "the public domain" has been with us for so long that most Americans have difficulty believing that Yosemite National Park could be preserved in any other manner than through government ownership. For that matter, a system of common property *appears* to have worked well because for most of this century the demands placed upon the carrying capacity of the public domain have been relatively insignificant.

Many ecologists and economists have pointed out that when there is little demand for land and resources it matters little what system of property management is employed because the negative results of common property management will not be felt. But we have long since passed that day in America. There are no longer any lands that nobody wants. Ecologist Garrett Hardin has written that using property as a commons "may work reasonably satisfactorily for centuries because [use is] well below the carrying

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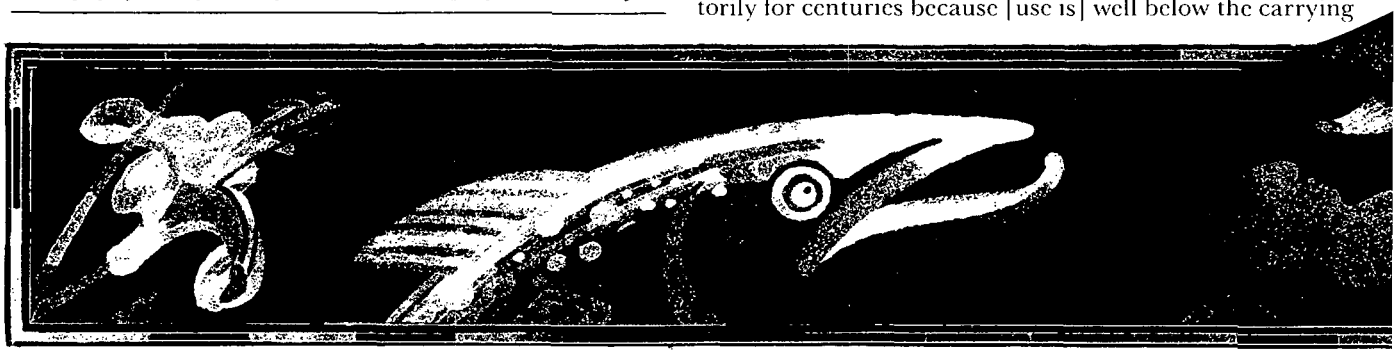

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capacity of the land. Finally, however, comes the day of reckoning. . . . At this point, the inherent logic of the commons remorselessly generates tragedy."

Hardin's concept of the "tragedy of the commons," articulated in his 1968 essay by that name, is crucial to an understanding of the inherent problems in managing "public" lands and resources as common property, and the growth of a free-market environmentalist movement. By definition, a commons is property or resources that "everyone" owns and has an equal right to use. But such a system gives each user an incentive to use as much as he can, as quickly as he can, because if he doesn't, someone else will. This leads to deterioration and depletion of the resource, until nothing usable is left; yet no one person can be held responsible, for was not everyone told that everyone had a common right to use the resource? Hardin contrasts this system to private ownership where, for example, "each herdsman owns the pastureland on which his cows graze. . . . He has an *intrinsic* responsibility, because if he makes the wrong decision, he's going to suffer from it." (Emphasis in the original.)

Under "the logic of the commons," appeals by environmentalists to raise public consciousness of the need to treat publicly held resources wisely will do no more than postpone the day of reckoning, not avert it. The commons system, by itself, includes no way to settle equally valid but mutually incompatible claims by a wide variety of potential users. In a commons system, all of these decisions must be made politically.

THAT DAY OF RECKONING HAS COME. The public domain is already being overused and overexploited at today's population level. In recent decades an ever-growing population, with larger discretionary income, a growing desire for recreation, and more interest in the outdoors and nature, has quickly pushed against the carrying capacity of almost all of the public domain. The more spectacular and popular areas are rapidly beginning to deteriorate in quality; some areas are now so overused and crowded that they appear ravaged and seem to have lost many of the very environmental amenities they were set aside to maintain. This is especially true of the national park system—several government studies have documented their deplorable state.

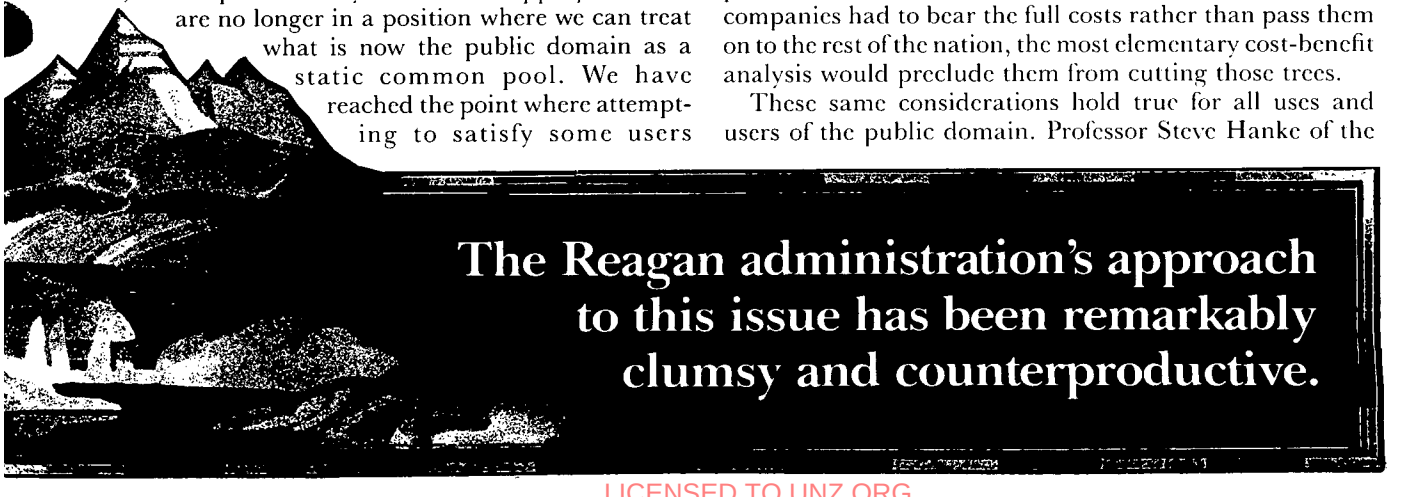
But the only answer of the environmentalists and bureaucrats has been to take more land and expand the parks. Given the growth of competing demands for scarce resources, this response hardly seems to be appropriate. We are no longer in a position where we can treat what is now the public domain as a static common pool. We have reached the point where attempting to satisfy some users has begun to impinge seriously on others who can also legitimately claim their equal share of "the people's" lands through right of common ownership and payment of taxes to manage these lands. Under the present system, each user group pushes for an ever-expanded share of the public domain to be reserved for its special interest. Wilderness advocates want ever-larger tracts of land set aside as wilderness. Forest products companies lobby for increased access to old-growth and virgin stands of the northwestern coniferous forests. Ecologists, naturalists, botanists, and anthropologists call for protecting more of the fragile desert environment from the ravages of off-road vehicles, campers, miners, cactus collectors, and amateur collectors of Indian relics. Those who use off-road vehicles, valuing their freedom to drive wherever they wish on what they also view as their lands, call for greater access to the public lands and successfully lobby for repeal of restrictions from this administration, which happens to be sympathetic to uses other than backpacking.

If users could no longer rely on the political process to obtain use of the areas they desire, and could no longer tap the resources of another gigantic common-pool resource, the federal treasury, to pay for the management costs, we would soon see the beginning of a far more rational system.

If, for instance, the Wilderness Society owned the wilderness areas, and had to manage them, protect and preserve them, and pay for the costs of that management, we would no doubt find wilderness advocates no longer believing that *all* of Alaska, or all of the roadless areas in the Overthrust Belt, must be set aside and managed as wilderness. By the same token, if the areas now set aside for mineral extraction and timber harvesting were removed from the public domain and turned over to forestry and mining companies, and if these companies bore the full costs of managing the inventories and exploiting the resources, we would find a much greater orientation toward conservation and long-term rather than short-term interests.

In particular, we would witness an end to enormously costly and environmentally destructive practices now carried on by the U.S. Forest Service. For example, in arid Rocky Mountain areas, environmentally damaging roads are now constructed to harvest timber whose value is far less than the cost of harvesting it. The resulting financial deficits are paid for by the taxpayers: Just as the wilderness advocates are able to use the political system to force other taxpayers to subsidize wilderness areas, timber companies reap similar benefits by forcing environmentalists and wilderness advocates, as taxpayers, to subsidize their unprofitable and destructive commercial activities. If timber companies had to bear the full costs rather than pass them on to the rest of the nation, the most elementary cost-benefit analysis would preclude them from cutting those trees.

These same considerations hold true for all uses and users of the public domain. Professor Steve Hanke of the



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Johns Hopkins University has done considerable research and analysis on the public grazing lands, which historically have been overgrazed. In the 1800s, when the federal government's misguided homesteading regulations limited property acquisition to uneconomic 160-acre plots, a classic commons system led to the destruction of vast areas of the western grasslands through overgrazing and set the stage for the "dust bowl." But even under today's more refined system of a managed commons with grazing permits issued to ranchers by the federal Bureau of Land Management, public grazing lands are less well managed than adjacent private grazing lands.

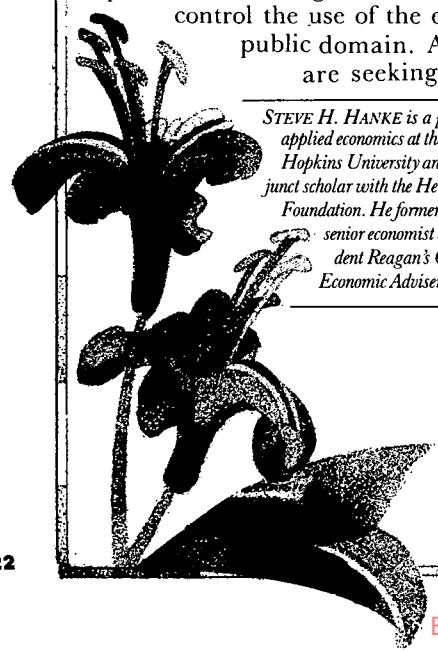
Public grazing lands are created and managed at considerable cost to the taxpayers and then leased to cattlemen at below-market prices. In addition to economic costs, the environmental costs of public grazing policy have been enormous. John Baden and others have documented the terribly destructive practice of "chaining" to create additional grazing lands. Entire pinyon and juniper woodlands are cleared, according to Baden, "by connecting two D8 size crawler tractors with 600 feet of anchor chain and dragging the chain through a stand of trees. Debris may be left in place or piled in windrows. The area is then seeded with grasses. . . . The total area chained in [Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Nevada] reached about 3 million acres by 1964. . . ." This practice does indeed increase forage production, but it also wipes out potentially valuable archaeological sites and destroys watersheds and wildlife habitat. The most favorable cost-benefit analyses of the practice have determined a *negative* benefit-cost ratio of 0.86. Clearly, private owners of grazing lands would not carry out these environmentally destructive practices to create grazing land at a loss.

ALL OF THE LANDS NOW CONSIDERED "public domain" could be allocated and transferred to applicable user groups. For instance, if the off-road vehicle associations were able to obtain their own lands—say so many thousand acres of desert land in southern California

Selling the Federal Lands

by Steve H. Hanke

UNCLE SAM'S VAST LAND holdings, six times the size of France, are up for grabs in one of the nation's most important political battles. On one front, the philosophical descendants of America's founders are fighting a host of corporate and environmental special interests over returning much of the public lands to private ownership. On the other, the special interests—cattlemen, large timber and mining companies, conservationists, environmentalists, recreationists, and developers—are battling one another to control the use of the existing public domain. And all are seeking to influence the self-proclaimed steward of our public lands, Interior Secretary James Watt.



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At the heart of this battle is the billion-dollar question: Should the federal government continue acting as lord over one of the world's great fiefdoms, or instead sell it off to the highest bidder? Proponents of the time-honored practice of privatizing America's public lands—transferring them from government to private hands—want to take land-use decisions out of the political arena. This would lead to more efficient use of the resources, and would expand individual freedom.

In fact, the nation's founders never intended that the federal government hold so much land. The national public domain, created after the Revolutionary War when the states ceded much of their lands to the central government to help it repay the war debt, and later expanded through purchase, treaty, and military conquest, was regularly turned over to private citizens through a combination of sales and homesteading.

Early in the 1900s, the first conservation movement, a coalition including upper-class technocrats, politicians, and big businessmen began to pressure the government to reverse the process that had turned more than half of the federal lands over to private individuals. By the 1960s, the privatization issue was dead, and the debate was over whether to preserve public lands or open them up to multiple uses. But in the 1970s dissatisfaction rose in Western states, where the federal government is the dominant landowner; increased multiple-use planning and set-asides for wilderness areas, wildlife refuges, and parks, and more centralized control in Washington, D.C., combined to give birth to the so-called Sagebrush Rebellion. Its original goal was simply to shift political control of the resources from the nation's capital to the state capitals—a "state's rights" issue. Thus the rebels were hardly rebels at all, for they supported "public" ownership, just at a different level of responsibility.

In 1981, however, the State's Rights Coordinating Council, a leading Sagebrush Rebellion group, reversed itself to support privatization, noting that "the continued ownership and management of much of this system by the federal government constitutes a philosophically indefensible form of collectivism which has proven to be wasteful and inefficient, and burdensome to American consumers, producers, and taxpayers."

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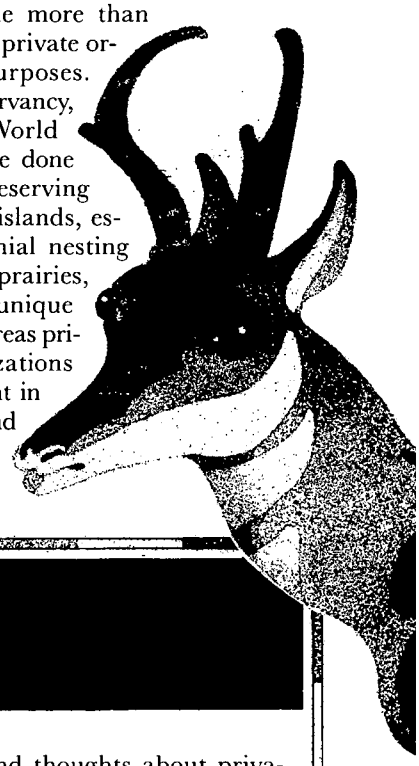
and Nevada, allocated so as to avoid destruction of archaeological sites and danger to plants and wildlife—then they could not pass on to others the costs of their recreation. If they destroyed their lands, they would be in the same situation as a farmer who kills or eats his breeding stock, or a sod farmer who neglects the fertility of his soil, or a tree farmer who neglects his seedlings. The officers and managers of these areas would then have a direct incentive to carefully manage and protect their lands, for those would be the only lands they would have. They would not be able to leave them degraded and then move on to other public lands. They would have to develop a careful program to avoid overuse, to restore eroded lands, prevent gullying, and replant and reseed denuded areas. And, of course, with adjacent lands also in private ownership, the activities of the vehicle users would be monitored to ensure that they were not causing harm to their neighbors. If there were harm, the aggrieved parties could obtain court injunctions or collect damages.

Those who fear potentially adverse environmental consequences of private ownership should recognize that there is a centuries-old tradition of successful private environmental-protection activities. In fact, in recent years private actions have been among the most effective in promoting conservation: In the 1970s alone more than 1,600,000 acres were acquired by private organizations for preservation purposes. Groups such as the Nature Conservancy, the Audubon Society, and the World Wildlife Fund in particular have done magnificent work in privately preserving wildlife, wetlands, coastal barrier islands, estuaries and tidal marshes, colonial nesting areas, cyprus swamps, tall grass prairies, and an entire range of areas of unique natural diversity. Owning these areas privately, the environmental organizations have had all the advantages absent in public ownership. The security and exclusivity of their ownership



The arguments for privatization also struck a responsive chord with President Reagan, who had been uncomfortable with the size of the federal government's land holdings. A limited privatization initiative—estimated to raise $4 billion annually by 1984—was included in Reagan's 1983 budget message, and is to be implemented by a Property Review Board, which will identify the parcels of land to be sold. However, the Reagan administration program is far too cautious: The amount of land affected is small, and the terms of sale are not yet developed.

Turning land back to individuals would depoliticize land-use decisions, while ending the taxpayers' liability for the government's expenses that exceed current rental payments. It would also improve the productivity and protection of these lands by eliminating the wasteful layer of government management, and by giving private owners an incentive to invest in improvements and conservation measures.

Unfortunately, even the Reagan administration's very limited program has run into serious opposition. Not surprisingly, modern environmentalists, like their forebears from the first conservation movement, oppose privatization on principle. They want to control the use of these lands, without bearing the responsibility and costs of ownership.

But the environmentalists have been joined by many of the very business interests that many people fear would buy up federal land and despoil it. For instance, real estate developers, who now own private land, oppose privatization because it would increase the supply of land and reduce the value of their personal real-estate holdings.

For similar reasons, some timber companies oppose the sale of any public stands of timber. Indeed, some of them have even been supporters of creating additional wilderness areas to take competing resources off the market.

Some mining companies, too, oppose sales, because their costs of prospecting, now carried out on a nominal-fee, "open-access" basis, would rise to market levels. And many sportsmen want to maintain federal lands so they won't have to pay for the privilege of hunting and fishing on federal land. Other recreationists, such as off-road vehicle users, boating enthusiasts and hikers, want to preserve federal lands as well, but for their own particular activities.

Finally, even many ranchers are having second thoughts about privatization. They are concerned about the costs of owning grazing land and are afraid of threats circulated by the Bureau of Land Management that the land would be bought up by "Arab interests." One journal noted that "ranchers would be more than irritated if they found they must pay grazing fees to a Saudi oil sheik."

Indeed, even Interior Secretary Watt is not enthusiastic about the program. He has, for instance, consistently underestimated the amount of "surplus" federal land that should be privatized—because it removes land from his control and thus undermines his vote-buying "good neighbor" and "exchange" policies, which provide for land transfers from the federal to state and local governments.

Privatization will succeed only if the people realize how much our current collectivist experiment is costing them, and how inconsistent it is with a free-market economy and the preservation of individual liberty. If the average American citizen cannot be motivated to support privatization, then the special interests, who are now benefiting from government ownership of these lands, will defeat even the modest Reagan plan. If they do, we will all be the losers. ▣

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means that owners and managers of these refuges and preserves can determine the optimal use of resources and then manage them accordingly *in perpetuity*—free from all the problems of conflicting multiple uses in the public domain, free from the uncertainty and vagaries of changing political priorities, and free from the pressures of the political decision-making process.

If, for example, the Nature Conservancy or the Audubon Society decides that an area is too sensitive environmentally for visitor use, then they can exclude visitors without fear that the next administration or Congress will determine that backpackers should be allowed to have access, or that cattle grazing is compatible, or that the public domain also belongs to off-road vehicle aficionados, or that 40 percent of the wildlife refuge should be made available for waterfowl hunters. However, if they do find that there are compatible multiple uses for all or part of their preserves, then they can allow carefully prescribed multiple uses that generate income to pay for management, educational activities, publication of conservation magazines and books, and the purchase of additional lands.

The Nature Conservancy, for example, has built up a private refuge system encompassing some 405,000 acres, including Santa Cruz Island off the southern California coast, virgin prairies throughout the Midwest, refuges representing all the natural diversity of the state of California, and the gem of its refuge system, the Virginia Coast Reserve, a string of thirteen barrier islands along the southernmost Virginia seashore. With the Coast Reserve under wise and careful management and protection, these fragile and environmentally important islands will not only be preserved from the major threat to barrier beaches—federally subsidized development and destruction—but will also not fall victim to the tragedy of the commons and the extreme overuse that has characterized public beaches throughout the country.

Another example is the National Audubon Society's 250,000 acre chain of private refuges, including the 26,800 acre Paul J. Rainey Wildlife Sanctuary in coastal Louisiana, winter home to perhaps one-third of all the snow geese in North America. The directors of the Audubon Society have determined that the function of the refuge is to preserve the snow geese and their habitat, and the refuge is managed accordingly. As the private owners of the refuge, they can and do restrict visitors to prevent disturbance of the geese, free from the pressures of having competing user groups, taxpayers, and "owners" of "the people's lands" demand that "their" public lands be managed in other ways.

There are many other smaller organizations, associations, and groups that have acted privately to preserve special areas, types of habitat, or wildlife. Groups throughout the Midwest have privately purchased or obtained nesting areas for prairie chickens and conservation easements for mating grounds, and have developed observation blinds and towers for birders and photographers. One of the most important private conservation efforts in the nation's history is the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, located in the Appalachian Mountains of Pennsylvania. Purchased quietly by conservationists for $3500 in 1934 to protect hawks against bounty hunters and "sport" shooters, it is now a self-supporting research and educational center that attracts crowds of up to 2000 people a day from around the world to view the spectacular autumn hawk migration.

Thus it is evident that a substantial private demand for environmental preservation and conservation exists today in the United States, a demand that has been translated—even in a market heavily distorted by government intervention—into millions of acres held privately for environmental purposes. The familiar equation of private ownership with environmental ruin is patently false.

OF COURSE, ANY PROCESS OF PRIVATIZATION of public lands would mean that some formerly public lands could fall under the ownership of commercial and pro-development interests. Yet, from an environmentalist's point of view, this should not be viewed with alarm, particularly in comparison to the situation that exists at present. A profit-oriented entrepreneur would be hard put to find an economic justification for building a shopping center, a high-rise apartment building, or an industrial plant in a wilderness area hundreds of miles from the nearest population center or economic base—especially if his neighbors, the owners of adjacent stretches of land, could bring suit against him if he were to affect adversely their property rights. As for those interests seeking to develop and exploit such resources as timber and minerals, the present system of the commons, or government ownership, actually encourages waste, destruction, and mismanagement by forcing the taxpayers to subsidize activities and practices that would not occur in a free market. Private ownership, on the other hand, would encourage careful, responsible development, managed with long-term conservation in mind.

Even in a "worst case" scenario, with a developer who, through ignorance or malice, actually does irreparable damage to his land, environmental losses would be held to a minimum—that is, to the extent of the developer's own holdings. He would not be free to claim and destroy additional land or resources under some notion of "common" ownership, or by grabbing control of the political process. In comparison, the "worst case" potential for destruction under the present system is virtually limitless; conservationists must rely solely on the good will of government managers and the wisdom of the political process. Such faith hardly seems justified—for years, many of the federal government's land-management policies have been environmentally destructive, and in the event of some "national emergency" and accompanying calls for, say, rapid extraction of strategic raw materials, concern for future generations would be unlikely to carry much weight in the Pentagon or the halls of Congress. Such a situation would quickly reveal whether or not the "public" lands are truly "owned by everyone."

Many of those who are both pro-free-market and pro-environmentalist have put forth proposals for the actual method by which what is now the public domain can be transferred to private ownership. These range from giving land to environmental groups to gradual, parcel-by-parcel disposition over a period of years, to modern versions of homesteading, to wide-scale auctioning off of public property to the highest bidders. All such proposals merit at least further study. But more important is increasing people's recognition that government ownership and management of our cherished land and other natural resources is a policy that is failing, hurtling toward disaster with increasing speed, and that if the future of our environment is to be bright, we must turn to the alternative solutions offered by private ownership. ▣

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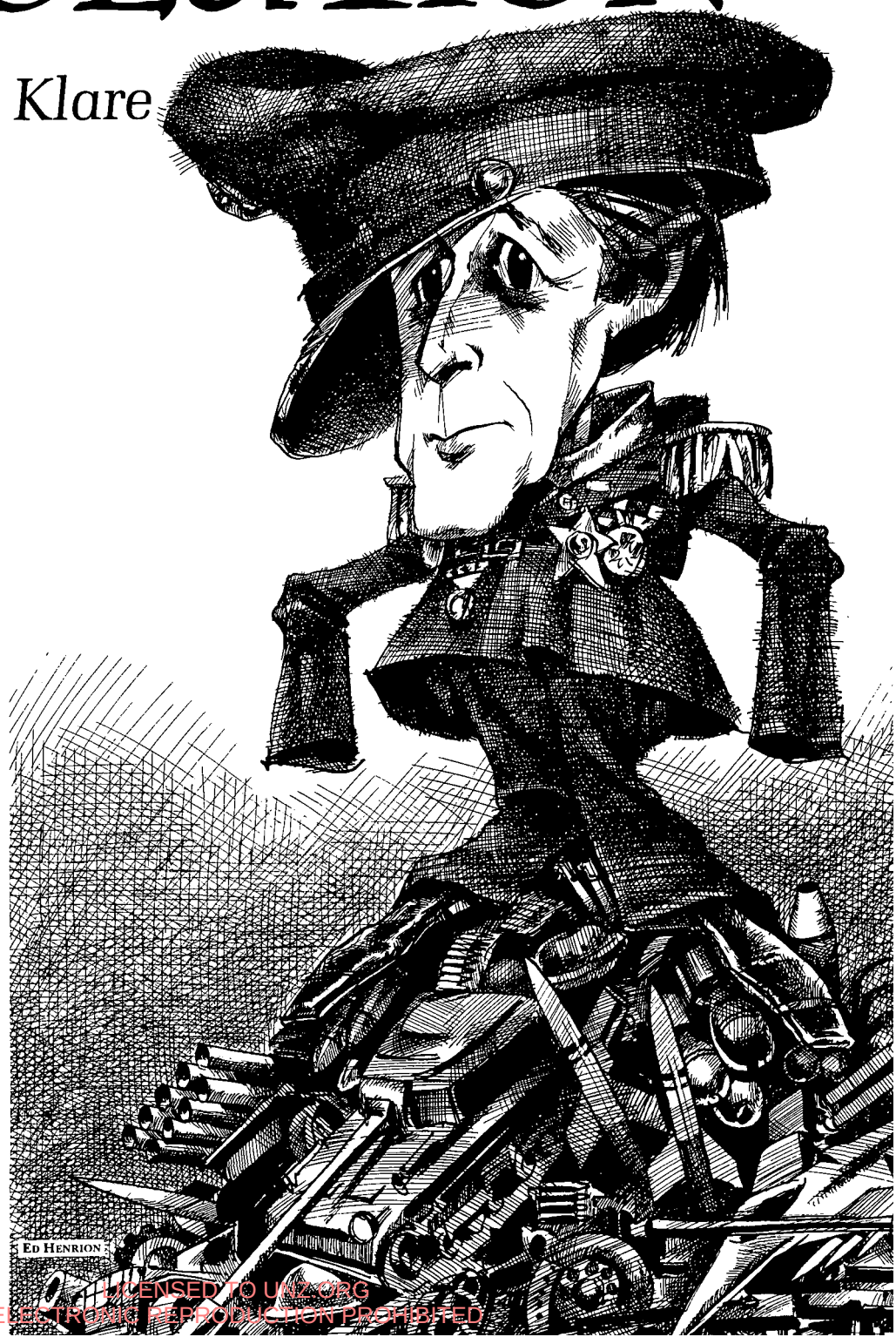
The WEINBERGER REVOLUTION

by Michael T. Klare

Keep your eyes on Caspar Weinberger's Department of Defense. That's where America's foreign policy is being made—and militarized.



THE HULLABALOO over Alexander Haig's resignation as secretary of state, and the extensive press coverage of his clashes with other top White House officials, have concealed the most significant power shift in Reagan's foreign-policy

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apparatus: the rise of Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger as the chief architect of U.S. strategy. It was, for example, Weinberger's tough stance on the Soviet pipeline embargo and on Israel that prompted Haig to step down. Other recent decisions, not as widely reported in the mass media, will leave Weinberger's stamp on U.S. foreign policy for a very long time to come. The really important question facing us now is not why Haig left the State Department or what George Shultz will do in his place, but rather how Caspar Weinberger and the Pentagon are reshaping American policy.

Some of the Pentagon's contributions to U.S. foreign policy are already evident: the initiation of economic and trade warfare against the Soviet Union, the extension of U.S. military ties with moderate Arab states (as reflected in the AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia), and the relentless expansion of U.S. nuclear arsenals at a time of growing European eagerness for arms control. Other changes, however, will not become fully visible until the mid-1980s or beyond. Some of these, such as the decision to elevate Middle Eastern strategic concerns over those of East Asia, represent a fundamental shift in the direction of U.S. foreign policy. What we are seeing, in fact, is a transformation of America's basic strategic outlook: the Weinberger Revolution.

At the core of this revolution is a wholly new attitude toward the Soviet Union. No longer will U.S. policy be designed to stabilize the Soviet-American arms race and to restrain Soviet advances in the Third World; instead, U.S. strategy will be aimed at *reversing* Soviet gains in peripheral areas while *escalating* the arms race to a point where economic pressures force the USSR to abandon its superpower ambitions altogether. As Weinberger put it in a recent talk at the National Defense University, "We will encourage long-term political and military changes within the Soviet empire that will facilitate building a more peaceful and secure world order." To induce such "changes"—by which he means the collapse of Soviet authority in Eastern Europe and other dominions—Weinberger plans to subordinate every other facet of U.S. foreign policy to a coordinated anti-Soviet drive.

The Weinberger Revolution will not only reshape U.S. policy abroad, but will increasingly mold domestic policy as well. Under the budget program announced by Weinberger in January, defense spending will swell so rapidly in the years ahead—from $182 billion in 1980 to $326 billion in 1987—that the administration will be forced into a bloody showdown either with opponents of massive deficits, or with last-ditch defenders of social entitlements programs. Furthermore, projected increases in military manpower—amounting to several hundred thousand men—cannot practically be achieved without reinstatement of the draft. And because these initiatives will almost certainly provoke increased opposition from various sectors of the population, they are likely to be accompanied by new restraints on individual and civil liberties.

Despite the far-reaching significance of Weinberger's plans, most Americans are unaware of his impact on U.S. policy. To some extent, this reflects the media's greater fascination with the mercurial Haig, and also reflects the fact that many of Weinberger's most critical decisions are buried in departmental documents whose contents, when not classified, defeat understanding by even the most informed analysts of foreign policy. Recently, however, the White House has leaked a number of basic strategy papers that allow us, for the first time, to chart the contours of the Weinberger Revolution. These documents are the consolidated defense guidance for fiscal years 1984–88, and a National Security Council (NSC) decision memorandum approved by President Reagan on May 21.

The defense guidance, written to Weinberger's specifications by a team of Pentagon strategists, establishes the strategic principles that will govern all basic decisions regarding the size, shape, and orientation of U.S. military forces in the years to come. Described by Pentagon insiders as "the first complete defense guidance of this administration," the Pentagon study also sets priorities for the acquisition of new weapons and other military systems. Although highly classified, portions have been leaked to a few leading newspapers and in trade journals like *Aviation Week and Space Technology*. The NSC document, written by former Secretary of the Air Force Thomas C. Reed on the basis of the defense guidance, sets broad administration policy on the whole sphere of national security and foreign affairs. While it, too, is classified, a précis was provided by National Security Adviser William P. Clark in a speech at Georgetown University on May 21. With these two documents, plus several recent speeches by the secretary of defense, we can construct a general outline of Weinberger's thinking.

IN BRIEF OUTLINE, THE DEfense guidance maintains that a future war with the Soviet Union would probably assume "global dimensions," and that the United States must therefore be able to fight the Soviet Union at several locations simultaneously. It further presumes that such a conflict could be conventional or nuclear, short or long in duration, and that American forces must consequently be prepared to fight and win a protracted conflict of either variety. To accomplish all this, U.S. forces must be much larger and more heavily equipped than is presently the case: According to Pentagon figures in the guidance document, existing forces will have to grow by ten Army and Marine Corps combat divisions (a 53 percent increase in division strength), eight aircraft-carrier battle groups (a 69 percent increase), and fourteen tactical fighter wings (a 58 percent increase) in order to meet Weinberger's estimated force requirements. This, in turn, will require an unprecedented peacetime investment of public funds—as much as $2.5 trillion over the next six or seven years—and most likely resumption of the draft and other unspecified "sacrifices" on the part of the American people.

This is, by any standards, an extraordinary and momentous program—surpassed, in recent memory, only by the U.S. military effort during World War II. What terrifying developments justify such an effort? Although his intentions are never fully articulated in the open literature, a close reading of Weinberger's published statements suggest that current administration strategy rests on the following basic precepts:

The Soviet Union is an aggressive, expansionist power now at the peak of its outward thrust. The USSR "has pushed its traditional policy of global expansion to a new dimension in recent years," Weinberger told the Council on Foreign Relations in New York on April 20, and "now has the power and reach to challenge our interests almost anywhere in the world." Soviet efforts in the Third World, moreover, "have increased in scope, pace, and aggressiveness." While hardly controversial, this per-

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ception conflicts with the views of other senior analysts, including many who perceive the USSR as a declining imperial power that can no longer rely on the stability of even its oldest satellites. Thus the administration's claims of Soviet expansionism were countered by George Kennan, former U.S. ambassador to Moscow, who affirmed recently that "I see no recent Soviet achievements in this direction which would remotely outweigh the great [Soviet] failures of the postwar period: in Yugoslavia, in China, and in Egypt." Kennan's view seems reasonable when one considers that the USSR is hopelessly bogged down in Afghanistan, is forced to immobilize one-third to one-fourth of its total strength on the Sino-Soviet border, must reserve a considerable portion of its remaining forces for possible intervention in Poland and/or other rebellious Eastern European satellites, and is being bled dry by the ever-mounting costs of sustaining prostrate economies in Cuba, Vietnam, and North Korea. Nonetheless, Weinberger's hard-line perception is terribly significant; by defining the Soviet Union as an expanding rather than contracting power, Weinberger sets the stage for a far more massive and rapid buildup of American forces than might otherwise be required.

Soviet military power has acquired a global reach, and must be resisted on a global scale. This precept follows from the preceding one, of course, but has a special meaning for Weinberger. Because the Soviet Union "is increasingly acquiring the forces for global operations," a conflict beginning in one place could rapidly develop into a war with "global dimensions," requiring U.S. military action both at "the point of aggression" and elsewhere in the world where U.S. interests are in jeopardy. And because U.S. forces might be outnumbered in some areas of likely conflict, we may "have to launch counteroffensives elsewhere," against such "Soviet vulnerabilities" as Cuba and Vietnam. Such a strategy, involving large-scale U.S. military action at several locations simultaneously, will require maintenance of much larger standing forces—particularly naval and amphibious forces—than we now possess.

To confront the USSR on a global scale, the United States must subordinate every other concern to the anti-Soviet effort. To the secretary of defense and his top aides, the current Soviet buildup represents one of the gravest threats America has ever faced, and requires, in response, a commensurate mobilization of American and allied resources. Because of growing Soviet power, Weinberger observed in April, "we are well into one of the most dangerous decades in our history." Indeed, "the whole future of freedom is in the balance," and unless we regard its preservation as being "worth any sacrifice," in the end "we will surely lose it." For Weinberger this means the commitment of whatever amounts of manpower and money are needed to develop a global counterweight to Soviet aggression, along with the subordination of all other international concerns—arms control, human rights, world trade, the cultivation of improved ties with our allies—to the anti-Soviet effort. If this means that relations with our allies have to suffer in order to deprive Moscow of trade benefits (as in the case of the gas pipeline), so be it; and if it means building new nuclear weapons before we can agree to new arms-control agreements, so be it.

President Reagan told a NATO conference recently that the United States and the Soviets "are at war."

The struggle against Soviet expansionism is a struggle to the finish, and our final goal must be nothing less than the total dissolution of the Soviet empire. Whereas earlier U.S. policy makers sought a path to world peace through détente and "coexistence," Weinberger and his colleagues believe that peace will be secured only when the United States and its allies succeed in dismantling the Soviet empire and obliterating Soviet military strength. At first, this means that we must "seek to reverse the geographic expansion of Soviet control and military presence" in the Third World, and then proceed to challenge Soviet authority in Eastern Europe. "To exploit political, economic, and military weaknesses within the Warsaw Pact," the 1984–88 guidance document notes, "special-operations forces [i.e., the Green Berets and their like] will conduct operations in Eastern Europe." Nor is this the final aim of Weinberger's counteroffensive; ultimately, his strategy will only be fulfilled when the USSR itself is neutralized as a military threat. To accomplish this, he proposes a stepped-up technological arms race, acquiring weapons that "[would be] difficult for the Soviets to counter, impose disproportionate costs, open up new areas of major military competition, and obsolesce previous Soviet investment." And while the goal of eventual Soviet prostration is never stated as such, it is fully implied in Weinberger's statement that "if we prudently exploit the weaknesses of the obsolescent Soviet empire, the people now living in the Soviet Union shall eventually live with us in peace. . . . "

These four precepts may at first appear unremarkable, given the persistent anti-Soviet character of postwar U.S. foreign policy; but they build, one upon the other, to a radical and frightening proposition: The United States must set itself on a war footing now, and gradually step up its military effort until the Soviet Union is ringed in on all fronts and forced, by economic necessity, to abandon its foreign dependencies and satellites. Further, if at any point in this process Moscow responds with military action, we must be prepared to defeat Soviet forces in any theater and at any level of violence. Although this proposition, as such, has never been submitted to the American public or its representatives for discussion or ratification, it will govern U.S. foreign policy (and many critical aspects of domestic policy) for years to come. Understanding this, we should not be surprised—as evidently Helmut Schmidt and other European heads of state were—by President Reagan's comment at the recent NATO summit that the United States and the USSR "are at war."

From this fundamental proposition, all other components of Reagan's foreign policy flow naturally. This is not to say that Reagan or Weinberger are rigid in their application of basic prin-

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ciples—they readily acknowledge that economic or political constraints will sometimes require alterations in their strategic framework. Thus, to appease European and American public opinion, the administration will engage in strategic arms reductions talks with the Russians at the same time that it accelerates the production and deployment of new nuclear weapons. Similarly, accepting that the United States cannot maintain equally powerful forces in all likely theaters of war, Weinberger has had to rank America's overseas interests in order of importance and to distribute U.S. capabilities accordingly. Ultimately, however, every major position taken by the Reagan administration on international issues can be traced to the precepts described above. To complete our analysis, therefore, we will show how some key foreign-policy positions have been shaped by the Weinberger Revolution:

—*Arms control.* Although the administration will consider arms-control agreements that promote U.S. nuclear superiority, it will not entertain any slowdown in the pace of U.S. nuclear modernization as an incentive for negotiations. As Weinberger explained in his talk at the National Defense University, "Arms control is not a magic substitute for arms, but rather one of several ways which can help make the military balance more stable." Even though the outcome of previous negotiations has been "disappointing," we will "cautiously and pragmatically" enter into new talks while proceeding energetically with a massive buildup of U.S. nuclear forces. (This wariness toward arms control led the administration in July to suspend talks on a comprehensive test ban treaty.)

—*European security.* While NATO remains the leading U.S. defense commitment abroad, Europe is but one of several key theaters in which U.S. forces may have to fight in a superpower conflict. This means that the NATO powers will have to do more—a lot more—in their own defense, will have to bow to American judgment as to how American forces will defend Europe in such a conflict, and will have to replace American troops withdrawn from Europe to fight in other areas. Furthermore, it goes without saying that European interests in East-West trade will have to be subordinated to the economic struggle with the USSR.

—*Middle Eastern security.* Because the Persian Gulf is so essential to the Western economies, and because it is located in an area of relative Western vulnerability to the Soviets, defense of the gulf must become a major strategic objective of the United States. This will require, according to Weinberger, the cultivation of close military ties with the moderate Arab states, and the formation of large mobile armies capable of being moved rapidly into the gulf area. To ensure the success of these efforts, moreover, the United States will have to prove more receptive to the Arabs' demands regarding Israel and the Palestinians, and transfer some military resources from the (relatively) less vulnerable East Asian theater.

—*Third World intervention.* Although the United States cannot be expected to respond to each and every instance of Soviet-inspired aggression abroad, we must, according to National Security Adviser William Clark, retain the option "to commit U.S. forces to assist our allies" when threatened by Soviet clients or Soviet-backed guerrillas. Furthermore, to respond where it is impractical or imprudent to commit regular U.S. combat forces, we must develop and expand our special-forces capabilities. As noted in the defense guidance, "We must revitalize and enhance special-operations forces to project United States power where the use of conventional forces would be premature, inappropriate, or infeasible."

—*Arms sales and military assistance.* The United States cannot blunt the global Soviet threat single-handedly, so we must encourage our friends and allies to assume greater responsibility for their own defense. This requires, however, that we provide them with additional arms and technical assistance. "Security assistance . . . can increase the ability of our friends and allies to defend themselves without the commitment of our own combat forces," Clark explained in his May 21 Georgetown talk, and, thus, "We are planning a priority effort to improve the effectiveness and the responsiveness of this vital component of our national-security strategy."

These are some of the critical ways in which Secretary Weinberger is attempting to reshape global U.S. strategy. Other Weinberger initiatives—the extension of the arms race into space, the naval buildup in the Caribbean, and the production of new chemical munitions—will intensify the militarization of U.S. foreign policy. But there are constraints on how far the Weinberger Revolution can go. The public remains adamantly opposed to the use of combat forces in Vietnam-type conflicts, and Congress has resisted administration pleas to increase military support for the government in El Salvador. More broadly, the budget figures envisioned by the defense guidance, on the order of a 50 percent increase in spending over the next five years, are simply unrealistic in a period of economic stagnation and mammoth budget deficits.

NONETHELESS, WEINberger has set into bureaucratic momentum an impressive portion of his overall program. By prevailing on Congress to approve multiyear contracting for proposed weapons, he has committed the government to future purchases of dozens of costly new systems. The full cost of these commitments will only show up several years from now. Thus, while congressional approval of the Pentagon's request for two nuclear-powered aircraft carriers will produce only a few hundred million dollars in actual spending in 1982, it will entail spending some $50 billion over the next ten years for the two ships and their multiple escorts, aircraft and missiles to be deployed on the carriers, and manpower and operating costs. If past experience is any guide, moreover, cancellation of these programs will prove more difficult once particular corporations, bureaucracies, communities, and legislators acquire a vested interest in their continuation. By gaining approval for his budget program now, therefore, Weinberger has ensured compliance with his overall strategic plan for years to come.

How the Reagan administration actually uses the weapons it acquires is a different matter. No doubt it will continue to press for greater freedom of action in the world, for unbinding the last shackles of the "post-Vietnam syndrome." If Congress, the press, and the public at large continue to look to George Shultz and the Department of State for expressions of current U.S. foreign policy, they will miss the dangerous trends steering our country toward foreign confrontations. We should be scrutinizing instead the great helmsman of America's military buildup, Caspar Weinberger. ■

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THE FLATTER THE BETTER?

Abolishing the income tax altogether is what we ought to do—but the more politically expedient flat-rate tax proposal could give us relief from bracket creep, crazy IRS rulings, and an economy turned inside out by attempts to wring advantages out of the current tax system.

by Ron Paul

I *WILL NOT* be satisfied with anything less than the total abolition of the income tax. Indeed, after years of careful study of the science of public finance, and lengthy consultations with eminent practitioners of the dismal science, I have come to the conclusion that there is but one source of revenue ideally suited to the federal government. This single tax would cover all the necessary and legitimate functions of a central government, would be simple to administer, and would have built-in self-limiting features. The tax is a toll on the roads entering the District of Columbia, with the rate at whatever the traffic would bear, so long as people were allowed to leave town at no charge.

Unfortunately, my intuition is that a majority of my esteemed colleagues are not yet ready for this sort of comprehensive tax reform. Therefore, without doubting the compelling arguments for full abolition of the income tax, I support a more modest reform, the flat-rate income tax.

I recognize, of course, that the flat-rate tax would still be coercive, and would still have a redistributive effect, lessening, not eliminating, these and other injustices of the present system. Nevertheless, the flat-rate tax would be far more equitable, simple, and efficient than the unbelievable mess we have now. In addition, a flat-rate tax would spread the burden of paying for government more evenly, foreclosing once and for all the illusion that the burden can be placed on the shoulders of the rich. By shifting the tax burden toward the political center, *any* flat-rate tax would increase pressures for *less* government taxing and spending. This would surely be one of the most salubrious effects of a flat-rate tax.

Admittedly, many of those who favor the flat-rate tax have impure motives. Some hope that it can be used to squeeze more revenue from the hapless taxpayers. For example, one congressman has proposed a flat tax of 15

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TAXES:

A flat-rate tax would make it possible to tear out thousands of pages of IRS rules and file income taxes on a postcard.

percent on all income over $8000 (the exemption amount for a family of four), with no deductions, exclusions, or credits, except for a deduction for donations to churches. His bill is supported by supply-side economist Paul Craig Roberts, who has estimated that it would *increase* tax revenues by $45 billion in 1983. I cannot help but wonder whether a similar motive underlies recent pronouncements from the Reagan administration about the "immorality" of progressive taxation, and the advantages of proportional (flat-rate) taxation.

Indeed, the flat-rate tax is the *ultimate* supply-side reform: The tax brackets would be completely eliminated, as would the escalating disincentives that deter people from saving, investing, and otherwise trying to hit the jackpot. Paul Craig Roberts glimpses nirvana in the "flat-tax" world of the future:

> Imagine a world free of bracket creep, tax indexing, high interest rates, capital shortages, marriage penalties, and penalties for success. Imagine the end of the underground economy and the improvements in economic efficiency that would result from the elimination of the numerous distortions in the tax code. Not least of all, imagine being able to quickly and easily prepare your own income tax form.

It certainly gives you a warm feeling inside, doesn't it? Well, it might, until you consider that the supply-siders are perfectly comfortable with the idea of a big, strong, and inexorably growing federal government. For many supply-siders the point of cutting taxes is not to enhance freedom and reduce government resources, but to increase government revenues so that government can go on spending more and more year after year. Any concern for individual freedom among supply-siders seems, at times, purely incidental.

I do not support the flat-rate tax as a method of raising total taxes. However, the case for the flat-rate doesn't need that foundation. My bill, H.R. 6352, for example, would *reduce* government revenues. It would impose a 10 percent tax on all individual income over $10,000, and would wipe out all deductions, exemptions, and credits. Linking elimination of both progressive tax rates and "loopholes" together in a single bill makes sense because it is the outrageously high progressive rates that justify the tax shelters in the first place. Also, eliminating the deductions, thereby "widening the tax base," allows a very low, flat rate, which may be the only way to pry all the special interests away from their pet tax breaks.

THERE ARE SEVeral important arguments in support of the flat-rate tax. The most obvious advantage is simplicity: With the progressive rates and all the "loopholes" gone, we could tear out thousands of pages of IRS regulations and get rid of short forms and long forms, and the headaches and uncertainty. Income taxes could be filed on a postcard.

The blood, sweat, and tears, and the time and the expense, caused by the complexity of the current law, is a very real part of the total tax burden. Indeed, Peter Brimelow has reported in *Barron's* that nearly half of the taxpayers were driven to pay for professional help with their taxes in 1977, and estimates the direct costs of complying with IRS regulations at around $60 billion. This, of course, doesn't include the billions that the IRS spends to track down and punish tax evaders. The flat-rate tax would greatly reduce this extra tax burden.

A flat-rate tax would also improve economic efficiency. Progressively higher rates distort incentives to work, save, and invest, and thus discourage, especially as one moves up into higher tax brackets, the very activities that make a people prosperous. Why work overtime or make long-shot investments, when you know that most of the extra income will simply be confiscated? Ironically, by discouraging effort in this way, the progressive income tax shelters old wealth and makes it more difficult for the middle class and poor to acquire new wealth.

Incentives are not only thwarted by excessive rates, but also *skewed* by deductions. Home ownership is good, but so is industrial investment, especially when one's trade competitors are operating with plant and equipment a generation or so more advanced than one's own. But when the government channels credit into homes, it inevitably hurts industrial investment. Only the market—not politicians—responds efficiently to the relative costs and benefits of different investments.

The progressive income tax, being a government instrument for manipulating individual behavior, is not just economically inefficient, but also restrictive of our liberty. The flat-rate tax would end this obnoxious form of government intrusion.

Yet another advantage of the flat-rate tax would be its liberating effect on economic activity that now goes on underground. The size of the "underground economy"—basically the amount of income not reported to the government— was estimated at upwards of $400 billion in 1981, about 14 percent of the GNP, by Peter Gutmann of Baruch College. Even if you view the resulting revenue losses of more than $100 billion to the treasury as a *good* thing, it is still unfortunate that so much productive activity is forced into hiding. A low flat-rate tax would re-

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TAXES:

BUT WILL IT REDUCE TAXES?

Jimmy Carter rightly called our tax system "a disgrace to the human race," and we should spare no effort to make it more simple, fair, and economically efficient, while limiting the invasive powers of the IRS. But would a flat-rate income tax really do this? If not, we should concentrate on the most important objective—reducing the burden of taxation.

Reducing taxes is important because the average American today has almost half his income seized by various governments: It is difficult to call our society free when government confiscates almost half of everything we earn. Even medieval serfs had to give up only one-fourth of their income to their lords.

Besides restricting our freedom, high taxes depress and distort our economy. They deprive businesses and individuals of investment capital and incentive. Taxes discourage workers from working by reducing the real reward for work, and they substitute the demand preferences of politicians and bureaucrats for those of consumers and taxpayers.

Would the flat-rate tax reduce taxes? The only answer we can give is, maybe: It depends on the rate and the particular plan. For example, Senator Dan Quayle (R-Ind.) supports a plan under which, he proudly tells us, "total [federal] revenues would have been nearly $30 billion more than will be collected under the present tax laws." Surely the government taking another $30 billion out of the private economy is no way to increase fairness and economic efficiency.

Of course, a flat-rate tax with a high enough personal exemption and/or a low enough rate could result in a net tax cut, but that goal doesn't seem uppermost in the minds of its advocates. Even if the total in taxes collected were not increased, a flat-rate tax has little to offer those who want to reduce the government's role.

For instance, a flat-rate tax would be simpler than our present system, assuming, of course, that Congress would actually pass a simple tax bill eliminating all the exemptions, deductions, credits, and exclusions in the current law. But would it be more fair than our present system? All taxes are unfair, taking money from people who have earned it and giving it to people who have not. Is a mugger who takes the same amount of money from everyone passing his corner "fairer" than one who takes different amounts from different victims? Our goal should be to minimize coercion rather than to spread it around.

A flat-rate tax probably would be more economically efficient, that is, would cause fewer distortions in the economy, than the current system, since high marginal rates discourage additional effort, and the various credits and deductions channel resources into areas favored by the government rather than the taxpayers. But simply lowering rates across the board and expanding credits and deductions would reduce this "inefficiency." And let us not be misled into thinking that a flat-rate tax is efficient per se. *All* taxes discourage work and investment, and all taxes distort the economy; the overall level of taxation—the net depradation of society by government—has more effect on the economy than the specific form of that depradation.

Many have enthusiastically noted the flat-rate tax's "liberating effect" on economic activities that now occur "underground." But bringing economic activity within the reach of the tax system is liberating only in the sense that people may feel lower tax rates are a lesser burden than the inconvenience of going underground, where people must get along without such conveniences as checking accounts, legal contract enforcement, and advertising. Even then, they are no more liberated than is, say, a draft evader who decides that a brief jail term is preferable to permanent exile. And if more IRS resources are freed up to harass the underground economy, those people will be worse off.

Indeed, the powers of the IRS might be increased under a flat-rate tax. Much IRS power is now channeled into enforcing the various complexities of the law, but even with a flat rate the IRS would have to ascertain that taxpayers are reporting their entire income (a term that is more complex than it sounds). Moreover, if the IRS spends less time on esoterica in the tax code, and they still have the same number of IRS agents, they will spend more time on enforcing the simpler requirements for everyone.

Perhaps the biggest problem with the flat-rate proposal is that it is a red herring, diverting us from the real goal of reducing taxes. It offers the *prospect* of some appealing reforms—simplicity, efficiency, maybe even lower rates—but if we end up with the Quayle proposal, or a similar plan, the appearance of reform will have led to *higher* net taxes.

The basic issue comes down to this: If we really think that Congress and the special interests that cluster around it will implement a simpler, fairer, more-efficient, *lower* tax, then we should support the flat-rate proposal. But if we doubt that, we should not let our efforts be diverted from the main goal, fighting for tax *reduction*. ■

DAVID BOAZ is vice president for public policy affairs of the Cato Institute, a Washington-based policy research foundation.

by David Boaz

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TAXES:

The wealthy and the poor now pay much higher percentages of their income in taxes than do those with moderate incomes.

duce the oppressiveness of the tax code, bringing economic activity above-ground if the people found the tax burden on them sufficiently lessened.

The flat-rate tax would also help us curb the inordinate powers of the IRS. People are justified in using the law to shelter as much of their income as possible from the rapacious maw of the taxman, but the statutes are so vague, the deductions, credits, and loopholes so complex, and the powers of the IRS so unbridled, that few individuals can conduct their affairs without trepidation.

Indeed, taxpayers are presumed guilty until proven innocent in IRS tax courts, and the IRS has often acted as a Gestapo, uncontrolled by the legal safeguards we all normally take for granted. It makes absolutely no difference that many IRS prosecutions result from the bad advice of the agency itself; in 1978, House subcommittee staffers found that IRS taxpayer-assistance offices provided wrong answers one-fourth of the time! No wonder one internal IRS memorandum asserted that "agents should be able to discover errors in 99.9 percent of all returns if they want."

The simplicity of the flat-rate tax would change all this. We could fire thousands of IRS agents, and this alone might be reason enough to go flat out for the flat-rate tax.

Finally, the flat-rate tax is more fair: Everyone would pay the same percentage of their income. The wealthy would, of course, still pay more, but they would pay at the same *rate* as everyone else. It is true that the flat-rate tax would still be coercive and redistributive. But every tax is coercive, and any tax not scaled precisely (somehow) to the value of benefits derived from the government will be redistributive.

I *SHOULD EMPHASIZE* that, despite occasional spectacular cases of tax avoidance, the federal income tax is progressive—the rich pay not only more of their income to Uncle Sam, but also pay a higher percentage of their income, than do those with lower incomes. Despite the preoccupation of liberals and the media with sensationalizing the tax "loopholes" of the wealthy, the biggest such tax breaks are solidly middle-class. The largest is the exclusion for employee pension-plan contributions and earnings, closely followed by the deductibility of mortgage interest on homes. Thus people at the lower end of the income scale are able to shelter a much higher portion of their income from taxes than are the wealthy. Those making less than $5000 per year shelter a third of their income from taxes, while those making more than $50,000 a year shelter less than a fifth. In fact, the Tax Foundation reports that the tax burden of the average taxpayer rose 75 percent from 1975 to 1980, and 87 percent for those in the top 10 percent income bracket. By 1980 more than half of the individual income tax bill was shouldered by these 9 million top-income taxpayers.

Now, most other taxes, such as social security and sales taxes, have a "regressive incidence," which means, in plain English, that the percentage people pay declines as they become wealthier. Thus, when you take all taxes together, you get a very surprising result: People at either end of the income scale, the very wealthy *and* the very poor, both pay much higher percentages of their income in all taxes than do people with moderate incomes. Some people have attempted to justify steep progressivity in the income tax as compensation for all these other regressive taxes. This is the sort of logic that only an IRS agent could love. The other oppressive taxes should be reduced, not the income tax raised.

Traditionally, people have also attempted to justify progressively increasing tax rates through the utilitarian "equal-sacrifice doctrine." According to this doctrine, taking a dollar from a man with an income of $10,000 will hurt him more than taking a dollar from the man with $100,000. To equalize the sacrifice—the *pain*—you must take more from the man with the larger income. Because the rich person can "afford" to pay more, the doctrine requires you to tax him progressively rather than proportionately, taking a higher percentage of the wealthier man's earnings.

At least the equal-sacrifice doctrine recognizes the coercive and hurtful nature of taxation. But beyond this, it is utter hooey.

There is no principle to guide the selection of the rate at which you tax the wealthier man. There is nothing to limit that rate or to prevent the system from being arbitrary and vindictive. In fact, the progressive income tax, conceived and sold to the electorate as a modest measure, has become just such an arbitrary and vindictive tool. When graduated taxes were introduced in Britain in 1910 and America in 1913, the top rates were 8¼ percent and 7 percent respectively. Within a scant thirty years, the top rate had risen to a staggering 97½ percent in Britain and 94 percent in America. Federal spending has risen from $735 *million* in 1914, the year after the income tax was introduced, to $770 *billion* in the 1983 budget, a better than 100,000 percent increase.

Moreover, when you look at real people, it is, of course, ridiculous to argue that a dollar is *always* worth less

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The flat-rate tax would eliminate the temptation for a majority to impose a heavier tax burden on a minority.

to the guy with a higher income. This utilitarian doctrine simply gives a pseudo-scientific gloss to the prejudices, intuitions, and pure envy of a political majority.

Even if this utilitarian justification for the progressive tax had any moral force, it should mandate the highest taxes on the individuals who care the least about money, to equalize everyone's "pain level." Thus there ought to be a special surtax on Buddhist monks and a special rebate for the Midases and Scrooges of the world. If the greedy are generally wealthier than those indifferent to money, then a regressive tax really equalizes "pain."

BUT ALL THIS utility analysis is sheer claptrap and is totally divorced from what should be most important: A man has a *right* to keep his income. Since the strength of that right does not diminish as his income increases, a flat-rate tax is clearly morally superior to a progressive one.

Thus, eliminating the progressivity of the federal income tax would be a significant accomplishment. Friedrich A. Hayek accurately called the progressive tax "not only the chief source of irresponsibility of democratic action but [also] the crucial issue on which the whole character of future society will depend." William Pitt saw any experiment with graduated tax rates as "a presumptuous attempt to derange the order of society, which would terminate . . . in the overthrow of civilized life." Marx and Engels also saw the importance of "a heavy progressive or graduated income tax . . . [which would] wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the state . . . as a means of entirely revolutionizing the means of production." The flat-rate tax would end this progressive wresting of capital away from the productive, and would finally banish the immoral notion that the successful owe ever larger portions of their lives to the government.

As I argued at the outset, the flat-rate tax has many advantages. But perhaps the greatest advantage of any flat-rate tax is eliminating the temptation for a political majority to impose a discriminatory tax burden on a minority. Politicians would have a harder time selling spending programs, and, in effect, buying votes, when the cost of paying for government is spread more evenly over the electorate. A flat rate would promote *political* efficiency as well as economic efficiency.

The flat-rate income tax should be supported not just for the sake of simplicity, fairness, and economic efficiency, but also because it would clip the wings of demagogues and strengthen the drive for a smaller federal government. And this, after all, should be our ultimate goal. ▣

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Books

Tomorrow, Capitalism: The Economics of Economic Freedom, by Henri Lepage. Open Court, 254 pp., $14.95.

Enter the new economists

ISRAEL KIRZNER

FROM ALMOST EVERY point of view this book must be described as brilliant and exciting. It is the English-language version of a French work, published in 1978, that has enjoyed remarkable popularity in Europe and been translated into six languages. Its author is described in Professor James Buchanan's foreword as having appeared, in 1976, as an "intense young journalist." But there can be few other journalists, young or old, and of whatever degree of intensity, that could write so lucid and readable an account of contemporary developments in American economic research, and link these rather abstract developments so provocatively with burning social and public-policy issues being fought over at the ideological barricades.

What Henri Lepage has done in nine chapters is to survey the contributions to current economics of a range of scholars whom he dubs the "new economists" (most of them are associated in one way or another either with the University of Chicago or with the Virginia Polytechnic Institute) and to argue persuasively that these contributions provide, at last, the intellectual and scientific ammunition needed to defend a philosophical commitment to the free-market economy. In the course of his survey Lepage examines the historical roots of capitalism and its key institutions, as set forth by writers such as Douglass North, R. M. Hartwell, and others. He considers the works of the property-rights theorists such as Coase, Alchian, and Demsetz. Lepage further explores the prolific research done by the school of Public Choice economists, led by James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock, in applying the tools of economics to understanding the incentives operating on persons, like government officials, who are confronted by nonmarket choices. In a separate chapter Lepage reports on work done by writers from a variety of different schools on the economics of regulation and on the standard policies of the typical modern welfare state. The author devotes considerable attention to what he terms the "Gary Becker Revolution," focusing particularly on the theory of human capital as applied to a wide range of phenomena that had, in the past, been traditionally the domain of other disciplines such as sociology, rather than of economics. Finally, the ninth chapter probes the monetarism of Milton Friedman and his followers, and its implications, at the level of macroeconomics, for the "death of Keynes."

In this rapid but thorough and competent survey, there are few aspects of the works of these various schools that are not brought within reach of the general reader. Lepage's capacity to sponge up ideas, digest them, and reorganize them in systematic and popular form is quite extraordinary. He reports on the work of scores of writers, and his bibliography runs close to 200 highly significant items. Were this book to be no more than a popular introduction to these important contemporary fields of economic research, it would have earned an honorable place indeed in the rather sparse annals of "economics for the intelligent layman."

BUT THE VOLUME OFFERS far more than a remarkable layman's-version of somewhat esoteric work at the frontiers of economics. It promises its readers that this body of thought will be shown to provide, for the first time, the definitive scientific case for no less unpopular a social system than capitalism itself: "Recent advances in economic theory . . . now give us the means of showing that belief in economic and social freedom is not founded on a simple act of faith in an ungraspable 'invisible hand' but is supported by a rigorous analytical and scientific approach." It is doubtless this aspect of the book that is responsible for the unusual interest the book has aroused. And it is this aspect that I shall be scrutinizing in what follows.

How powerful a case does Lepage present? Will honest critics of capitalism who read this book be convinced that their time-honored arguments against it have indeed been pulverized by the cogency of its pro-laissez-faire logic? Should veteran defenders of the free market indeed feel heartened by the message of this book: that, at long last, their staunch faith has been rewarded, that the validity of what they have, up until now, merely believed or asserted, has finally been incontrovertibly demonstrated?

The case for capitalism presented by Lepage rests primarily on his conclusion that the "new economists" he reports on in this book have, for the first time, provided "empirical corroborations of the *Homo oeconomicus* paradigm . . . that serves as a basis for all economic analysis." It is this that Lepage sees as holding "cataclysmic implications for the future of the philosophy of economic freedom." This philosophy, Lepage asserts, is based on the "economic view" of human behavior, seeing man "simply as a rational being who makes coherent decisions as a function of the problems of choice imposed on him by the scarcity of resources." It is appar-

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ently because this *Homo oeconomicus* paradigm has hitherto not been empirically validated, Lepage strongly implies, that up until now economic arguments in support of the free market amount to no more than "rhetoric" or "faith." I must confess that, for all my enthusiasm for this book, I find this line of argumentation profoundly disturbing in and of itself, as well as likely seriously to erode the case offered by the book on behalf of the free market. Let us probe further into this "rationality" upon which Lepage's brief for capitalism rests so heavily.

At one point, in drawing attention to the wide range of untraditional phenomena that the "new economists" treat as within the scope of their tools, Lepage perceptively links this view of microeconomics with the term *praxeology*, as "used by von Mises in his monumental work, *Human Action*." One is fleetingly drawn to hope that Lepage will see that the rationality upon which the truths of economics depend is indeed the same as that rationality that sustains Mises's praxeology—a rationality involving nothing more specific than the omnipresent *purposefulness* of human action. Unfortunately, it turns out that this is not the case. Early in the book, for example, Lepage states that the new economics has the merit of "accounting for apparently irrational phenomena (like the desire for . . . altruism and philanthropy)." Now this strikes one immediately as puzzling. Why should altruistic behavior be considered somehow not to be purposeful? When one presses on to the discussion of altruism in chapter eight, it becomes abundantly clear that the altruistic individual *seems* irrational because he refrains from maximizing some narrowly defined maximand, but that the new economics, coming to the rescue, shows him to be rational and maximizing after all, since what he is maximizing is, for example, "esteem, the importance of what others think of us" (for the acquisition of which ostensibly altruistic behavior is an available means). Apparently the idea of a person's acting *genuinely* unselfishly for the sake of purposefully enhancing the well-being of another, and for nothing else, violates the "rationality" postulate as understood by Lepage and the "new economists." The case for capitalism, we gather most apprehensively, is to be built on the new empirical "demonstrations" that man is indeed the hard-boiled, hard-nosed, tough-minded *Homo oeconomicus* of nineteenth-century notoriety. One wonders how solid a case for capitalism, and perhaps as importantly, how persuasive a case, can be built upon so unattractive a foundation.

Now Lepage is not insensitive to this kind of problem. But his strategy in dealing with the problem is troubling. On the one hand he is at pains to point out that the economic view does *not* consider man "as an egoistical monster but simply as a rational individual who makes coherent decisions. . . ." This seems aimed at reassuring us that rationality is neither repulsive nor unrealistic, and is in fact nothing more than the altogether plausible and natural manner in which we all know choices to be always made. It is this very *plausibility* of the all-pervasive rationality assumed in the "new economics" that permits Lepage to claim that this new economics is able for the first time to escape the charge that it is "divorced from reality." On the other hand Lepage elsewhere defends, on "instrumentalist" grounds, the rationality construct not as a *realistic* feature of society at all. Of course, he tells us, economics is not guilty of so crass a view as "to reduce all of human nature to *Homo oeconomicus*"; that would be "mad." In "positive" economics the unrealism of the rationality hypothesis is of no moment; the model generates valid predictions, and that is all we can ask for.

BARBARA STEVENS

Lepage's capacity to sponge up ideas, digest them, and reorganize them in systematic and popular form is quite extraordinary.

Clearly, then, what exempts the economic view from the charge of being divorced from reality is *not* the plausibility of the rationality hypothesis (which is in fact not being claimed by Lepage). So that the repulsiveness of the egoistical monster (which does after all seem to be necessary for Lepage's economic view) need not perhaps be so disturbing, since that concept does not necessarily correspond to anything in the real world. But, again, how much enthusiasm for the results of free-market choices is to be expected of those not prepared to embrace a theory in which the realism of its assumptions about human choice is held to be of so little significance?

These reflections lead one, in fact, to

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question most seriously the wisdom of Lepage's strategy in resting the case for capitalism so exclusively on the work of the "new economists." Before the models of the new economists appeared, Lepage suggests, there *was* no scientific basis for a persuasive case for capitalism. But it surely does not require us to question the impressive quality and volume of this new work in order to demur that (a) two hundred years of earlier work by brilliant economists from Adam Smith on, who understood the virtues of free markets, is not to be dismissed so lightly, and (b) the new work, whatever its scientific merit, is in some respects, at least, likely to be found *less* convincing than some earlier approaches cavalierly brushed aside by Lepage.

THE TRUTH SURELY IS that the view of man and of the market offered by Lepage in the name of the "new economists" is in significant respects likely to be unpersuasive in winning converts to capitalism. Not everyone will be able to keep it firmly in mind that the assumptions of the new economists are not supposed to be taken as realistic. For these, the view of man as single-mindedly selfish, and as endowed with Stigler-Becker preferences that *never* change, is likely to seem an unattractive foundation for the free market—and, moreover, a view hardly consistent with any deep enthusiasm for the value of individual freedom in all its richness and inherent unpredictability. For those laymen who will, on the other hand, keep firmly in mind that Lepage is *not* claiming realism for these assumptions, it must surely appear that the work of many of the economists cited does not in fact provide any satisfying causal explanation of *how* free markets achieve efficient results—we are simply provided with efficient as-if models, which the econometricians assure us do fit the statistics. But those whose untutored intuition assures them, say, that free markets are likely to result in chaotic, jungle-like social outcomes, are unlikely to see in the new economics convincing explanations of exactly how their intuition has betrayed them.

It is surely no disparagement of the "new economics" to remind Lepage that earlier economists (including several mentioned favorably in this book) have provided an understanding of the market that, without sacrificing one iota of scientific rigor, offered elucidations of the market process that generations of intelligent laymen have found thoroughly persuasive. This earlier tradition reached its high point, perhaps, with the work of the Austrians, Ludwig von Mises and F. A. Hayek. This approach did not, indeed, depend upon apparent econometric validation of arbitrary models. Rather, it drew upon a simple realistic understanding of how men choose, how they err, and how they learn—an understanding that has proved remarkably convincing and fertile. Economics in this tradition emerged as a "science of human action" in which free markets are shown to be marvelous engines for spontaneous error-discovery. (It is my understanding that in *Demain le libéralisme*, a later work as yet untranslated from the French, Lepage does incorporate insights stemming from this tradition.)

Lest my critical remarks be misconstrued, let me reemphasize my continuing enthusiasm for this book. As a popular exposition of difficult but exciting work at the frontiers, it is simply a tour de force. It provocatively draws attention to the important ideological and policy implications flowing from this work, implications that certainly lend support, in almost any way of looking at the matter, to defenders of the free market. Certainly, one may, as does this reviewer, question the strategic wisdom of grounding a popular case for the market *exclusively* upon this work. But there can be no question that Lepage has, in drawing together the strands of ideas presented in *Tomorrow, Capitalism*, offered lovers of liberty powerful weapons, and readers of all persuasions illuminating insights. For all this he has earned our admiration and our gratitude. ■

THE DEVIOUSNESS OF OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Nothing overt as lust led to this moment,
But years of mere encounters each remembers—
Humorous meeting of the eyes, or banter,
Or laughter, or a pause in summer shade.

Now we are in shadow—oh indeed—
And in each other's arms: meeting so intense
I barely feel your flesh, feeling

A fantasy grow warm between my hands:
A shade itself, a spectre intervening while the moment
Grows immense with its reality,
Immense with fact.

NEW BRUNSWICK STATION, 12:37 P.M.

Getting out of a habit of sadness—
It would be
Like climbing off a train
At a station which was, apparently,
Your destination—
You'd get off and watch it pull away, watch
The other people watch back,
Watch it disappear, and then
Turn toward the street,
Take the first step.

—Diane Middlebrook

DIANE MIDDLEBROOK's first collection of poems, Gin Considered as a Demon, *is about to appear from Elysian Press.*

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Oh What a Paradise It Seems, by John Cheever. Alfred A. Knopf, 100 pp. $10.00.

Regenerative man

GUY DAVENPORT

A STEADY CROW FLYING NNE across Boston Bay for twenty miles from Quincy on the south shore to Salem on the north moves along a line that criticism must inevitably draw between John Cheever, who was born in Quincy in 1912, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, who was born in Salem in 1804. Cheever, who died on June 17, shared with Hawthorne a mastery of the short story, a fascination for the slippery tussle between human nature and moral codes, and a fine, forgiving sense that grace can emerge out of the most wayward darkness of the heart.

The resemblances between these two scions of New England puritanism are seductive. They both put Italian paganism and American innocence in an ironic and heartbreaking contrast. They shared symbolic vocabularies of light and dark, old and new, spiritual deprivation and fulfillment, nature and civilization, man and woman. Cheever saw life as a process of impulses whose power to shape our destiny becomes apparent only when we can no longer extricate ourselves from them. The world is beautiful and fun; what we don't know in our joy of it is that what feels so good is addictive and the hangover bitter. All Cheever plots are about good intentions plunging with energy and verve into a trap. The older he got, the more he liked to think that the trap is purgatorial, is, in fact, good for us. Life has no other shape.

Unlike Hawthorne, he had the ability to see how gloriously ridiculous the fly is on its way into the spider's parlor. Cheever was one of the funniest of American writers. In an early story he brings a preternaturally innocent midwestern couple to Manhattan, where they live up to every sophisticate's ideal of country bumpkins. They are so incredibly gauche that we are told that their clownishness at a party caused the guests to walk in circles beating each other on the back. (This perfect economy of description is maintained in the latest, last novella, *Oh What a Paradise It Seems,* where a *mafioso* is given us deftly: " . . . one of those small, old Italians who always wear their hats tipped forward over their brows as if they were, even in the rain, enduring the glare of an equinoctial sun. These same old men walk with their knees quite high in the air as if they were forever climbing those hills on the summits of which so much of Italy stands.") It is not until we have finished the story about the rubes and city folk that we realize where Cheever's sympathy was. It was, as always, with the hapless fools.

Fool is the right word. Cheever was—like Flannery O'Connor and Eudora Welty—interested in human nature at its most vulnerable, because he was convinced that it could not be defeated, that this world is its home, that in our worst ineptitude at living, we are, if only we can see it, somehow thriving and being a success.

In this elegant novella, Cheever's protagonist is an old man whose sensual life is guarded like a match struck in a high wind. He has no intention of giving in, giving up, or giving an inch. He is well-to-do, he has been a skillful man all his life in business, in love, in savoir-faire. Cheever slips him neatly into a plot where greed fouls a lake, murders an honest man, intimidates a village; in short, into our world, which can be seen as a disintegrating fabric rotten in every seam.

This is the essential Cheever plot: a pattern of characters embroiled in self-perpetuating disaster, with a Dostoyevskian horror of the suffering of the innocent. There is an instructive contrast to be made between that other master of urban life, John O'Hara, and Cheever. Their stories begin the same way and move into the same kind of misunderstandings and accidents. O'Hara the pessimist drives on into bleakness, scruffy tragedies, dark lessons for us of moral gangrene. Cheever the optimist with a wicked smile and sheer joy at the shamelessness of his incurable brightness insists that things right themselves and turn out all right, or as all right as we can expect, given the nature of our folly.

Cheever slips his protagonist neatly into a plot where greed fouls a lake, murders an honest man, intimidates a village; in short, into our world, which can be seen as a disintegrating fabric rotten in every seam.

SO THIS LAST WORK, FOR all its charming (and unapologetically bawdy) realism, its unfooled view of nastiness, and its opportunity to be despairing, is a triumphant statement about the human condition and its regenerative resources. The fouled pond is cleansed and its pollutors put out of business. The old protagonist keeps discovering surprises in his determination to squeeze all the juice out of life. But Cheever knows that these local victories are precisely that: applicable only to this place, these lives. Squalor worsens elsewhere; that's a problem somewhere else. I doubt if Cheever would have generalized any of his particularities (one would have gotten that wicked smile for an answer if one had

Among GUY DAVENPORT's recent works are The Geography of Imagination, Trois Caprices, *and* The Resurrection in Cookham Churchyard.

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dared ask). He was not interested in framing laws of nature, only in describing with lasting authority special cases of human nature.

In one of the stories there is a rakish dog (it looks like a cavalier at the court of Charles II) who works a rich suburban neighborhood on evenings when cooking is done on backyard grills. He can nip over a hedge and make off with a rare steak before you've noticed a dog anywhere about. He smiles a lot, this dog, and has beautiful manners. He perhaps knows with great accuracy that three martinis induce inattention in bipeds, and that their minds, these nice people with such toothsome steaks, are on adultery and the stock market and gossip from the country club. Of morality the dog knows nothing, except that it is a highly moral skill to steal with such style and grace.

Dogs were created hunters and carnivores. In Cheever's novel *Bullet Park* a teen-aged boy with a luxurious house to live in, well-to-do parents, every opportunity for success, curls up in his bed and refuses to respond to any entreaty. He has rejected everything, for no reason anyone can discover. I think in all of Cheever's brilliant writing we are meant to see that boy who has given up in sharpest contrast to the elate, thieving dog. Some slip from grace that Hawthorne brooded on all his life keeps most of us from the lively successes of the dog, and some slip from what we have won back of that lost grace curls some of us up in defeat. Between these two states Cheever's characters move, foolish, anguished, most lost when they imagine they have arrived, happiest when they are wise enough to know that to be alive and free for a few hours is all there is. ■

In Print

IF YOU ARE AS COMPULSIVE A reader of newspapers as I am, you are probably aware that most syndicated political columnists get away with murder. What they offer two or three times a week in the place of the reporting and hard analysis that are supposed to be their job varies, of course. In the case of "the most pretentious journalist in capitivity," it is a series of obiter dicta sprinkled with Bartlett-type quotations, some of which are *not* from British Tory prime ministers. Others agonize for the required 800 words or so on why they just-can't-cope with the latest development on the political scene, while a few attempt to substitute a would-be "lively" style for the absent substance.

One columnist who gives you your money's worth and more, however, is *INQUIRY*'s own Stephen Chapman (who has recently joined us as a contributing editor). His well researched and carefully argued newspaper columns are the kind of work another writer would stretch over three pieces, or else outrageously pad and try to sell to the *Atlantic*. The trouble has been that up to now no one could read Steve's columns who didn't buy the *Chicago Tribune*, where he has been appearing on Thursdays and Sundays (and occasionally as an unsigned editorial writer) for the past year. Now, however, Chapman is being syndicated by the Tribune Company Syndicate, and ten papers have started buying the column. Those of our readers who are interested in raising the level of political debate, might consider suggesting Chapman to their local newspapers.

Volume 2, Number 1 of the *Cato Journal* has appeared and is devoted to the question of pollution and its remedies, reprinting almost all of the papers on that subject presented at a Cato Institute symposium held in Palo Alto last year. Among the authors are *INQUIRY* former editor Ronald Hamowy and contributors Murray Rothbard and Gerald Sauer. This 300+ page issue is well worth its $5.00 price.

Some recent works by *INQUIRY* authors: Charles Tomlinson has just published *The Oxford Book of Verse in English Translation* ($37.50), a new anthology that collects the finest poetic translations in our language from Gavin Douglas's sixteenth-century Scottish version of the *Aeneid* to contemporary work (including translations by other *INQUIRY* contributors like Guy Davenport and Donald Davie). . . . David Barton, whose poems have appeared in *INQUIRY*, has just brought out his first volume of verse, *Surviving the Cold*, in the prestigious new *Quarterly Review of Literature* series ($10.00). Evidently Barton's admirers extend beyond the staff of our magazine, because this volume has won him a fellowship at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown.

In its issue of June 19, the *Economist* featured a lengthy and highly informative survey of Japanese technology by its science and technology editor, Richard Casement. The article provides, besides a fascinating dissection of the Japanese economic miracle and a multitude of juicy details, a welcome antidote to the common view that farsighted government action has been essential to Japanese success. Says Casement: "In America and Britain over half of all R and D is paid for by the governments. In Japan, the figure is much smaller. This is sensible of the Japanese. . . . Projects backed by governments tend to be big schemes with small commercial prospects: ones that industry should be sensible enough to stay clear of." In fact, the most helpful action of the Japanese government has been to "encourage a financial and economic climate that favors investment." As for farsighted government: After the Second World War, a small new company called Sony wanted to purchase a license for the transistor from Bell Labs, which had found it couldn't make money from it; "bungling bureaucrats in Tokyo put up great resistance to letting Sony have the $25,000 in foreign exchange needed to buy the transistor license." Casement traces Japanese success not to the protectionist policies and government-coordinated export strategies so often cited, but to much more potent economic factors: high savings and investment rates, thorough market research, superb quality control, choosy domestic consumers, excellent workers, and aggressive management. As he puts it, "The market is king in Japan and companies respond rapidly to its changing fashions." —R.R.

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The Ominous Parallels: The End of Freedom in America, by Leonard Peikoff. Stein and Day, 383 pp., $16.95.

The butcher of Königsberg?

DAVID GORDON

*LEONARD PEIKOFF'S EN*try into the "why-Hitler?" sweepstakes comes to us with the imprimatur of the late Ayn Rand, who in her introduction hails the book as "brilliantly reasoned." Her followers regarded Miss Rand as a major philosopher, but I do not think even her most ardent devotees would claim her to have been an authority on the history of ideas. Had she been, it is difficult to see how she could have lavished praise on this misguided work. I cannot recall any other book that matches this one in its distortion of the history of philosophy.

Peikoff's principal thesis is a simple one. The prevalent explanations of the rise of Hitler to power in 1933 do not penetrate to the essence of the matter. Some historians have pointed to the failure of the Weimar Republic's successive governments to deal with the Great Depression as a principal factor inducing the desperate masses to succumb to the promises of radical change made by the National Socialists. Others have emphasized the fact that key sectors of German society—the army, the higher echelons of the civil service, and many of the intellectuals—did not accept the republic. Still other historians claim to explain Hitler by an innate depravity on the part of the Germans. (Peikoff rightly gives this last "explanation" short shrift, rejecting it as racist.) While recognizing that many of these accounts contain some truth, Peikoff finds the root of the matter elsewhere. (Oddly enough, in his canvass of the "superficial" factors explaining Hitler's rise, Peikoff does not find it necessary to mention German resentment of the Treaty of Versailles, though it was in fact the most persistent theme in German foreign policy throughout the interwar years. The treaty appears only once, in the course of his summary of the Twenty-Five Points of the Nazi party program.)

What then is the key to the mystery? According to Peikoff, if one seeks a *fundamental* explanation for the rise of Hitler, one must consult the science of fundamentals, that is, philosophy. Ludwig Feuerbach once said, "Man is what he eats." Peikoff has a different view—to him, man is what he believes about metaphysics, the theory of knowledge, and ethics. And it is because most Germans had distorted ideas on these fundamental subjects that they were unable to see the obvious flaws in the nostrums peddled by Hitler. The main reason, in turn, for their mistaken ideas was the malignant influence of Germany's foremost philosopher—Immanuel Kant.

Peikoff does not put all the blame for Nazism on Kant; other philosophers, like Plato and Hegel, must take their share of responsibility. But, however implausible it may at first sight have seemed, I was not exaggerating in stating that Peikoff regards the mild-mannered sage of Königsberg as a proto-Nazi. Peikoff goes so far as to say of life in the Nazi concentration camps: "It was the universe that had been hinted at, elaborated, cherished, fought for, and made respectable by a long line of champions. It was the theory and the dream created by all the anti-Aristotelians of Western history." The reader who has gotten as far as this point in the book will have no doubt as to the identity of the chief anti-Aristotelian.

WHAT IS SO BAD ABOUT Kant? According to Peikoff, Kant downgraded the physical world to which we gain access through our senses as a mere "phenomenal" realm. It was nothing but an appearance as compared with the "noumenal" world, which only faith, not logic, could grasp. In ethics, Kant spurned individual happiness as a matter of no moral worth; instead, persons were to subordinate themselves entirely to a duty that bore no relation to their interests as human beings.

These doctrines, Peikoff holds, paved the way for Hitler. The Nazis rejected reason—Kant taught that reason can teach us nothing of the world beyond mere appearance. Hitler's movement demanded that individuals sacrifice themselves for the common good—again, a theme straight out of Kant's ethics. So pervasive was Kant's influence, Peikoff argues, that no important group in the Weimar Republic dissented from the baleful doctrines of irrationalism, altruism, and collectivism. The decadent expressionist artists of the left shared the same Kantian irrationalist assumptions as their right-wing detractors. No one in Weimar Germany had the intellectual resources to mount an effective resistance to Hitler, hence his triumph in 1933.

In order to resist Hitler, what would have been required (but was nowhere to be found) was a correct understanding of philosophical basics. Specifically, a clearsighted defender of reason needs to acknowledge the existence of the external world (not a very demanding requirement, one would have thought) and accept an egoist ethics that rejects the duty of individual sacrifice. Someone who accepts these truths has implicitly rejected Kant in favor of the foremost pre-twentieth-century philosopher, Aristotle. In our own day, however, reason has made further advances: Ayn Rand has presented Aristotelian philosophy in a more consistent way than has ever been done before, purging it of the remnants of Platonism entangled in it.

Although, in the absence of Rand's novels, no one before our own time was in a position to see the truth full and entire, the founders of the American Republic came close. In their stress on individual rights and their basically secular outlook, the Founding Fathers were good Aristotelians. But the story of the United States is not altogether a happy one. In the nineteenth century, German philosophy was imported into our hitherto Enlightenment-oriented culture. Its influence has now become so dominant that the rationalism and individualism upon which the United States was founded have been displaced by the altruism and denigration of reason characteristic of—you guessed it—Kant's philosophy. Should this trend continue, an American version of Nazism may well ensue.

DAVID GORDON is currently completing a study of theories of individual rights.

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It is the growth of Kantian irrationalism in the United States that Peikoff has chiefly in mind when in his title he speaks of the "ominous parallels" between pre-Hitler Germany and America.

Whatever one thinks of Peikoff's thesis, it has at least one virtue: Peikoff, in concert with most other Randians, presents his ideas in a clear and forthright manner, so that, in Bacon's phrase, "he who runs may read." He is, I think, entitled to equal directness in response. Let us say at once, then, that Peikoff distorts Kant at every point. Kant was *not* a skeptic dismissing the sensory world as mere appearance. On the contrary, he thought of his *Critique of Pure Reason* as answering David Hume's skepticism. In particular, he attempted to explain causality in order to justify philosophically the achievements of Newton's physics. Kant was, in brief, a defender, not an opponent, of the real world. Peikoff himself is forced to acknowledge that "Kant does not repudiate the term 'objective,' and claims to oppose subjectivism," though this admission is hidden away in an endnote. When Peikoff defends himself by saying that Kant's objectivism is just a variety of subjectivism, he is precisely wrong. Kant's categories are *not* subjective creations of individuals or groups, but (he holds) necessary requirements of reason.

Even if Peikoff had been entirely right about Kant's metaphysics, however, his genealogy of Nazism would still appear more than a little silly. Does Peikoff really believe that anyone (outside of an asylum) doubts, in his daily life, the existence of the external world, or considers it the result of subjective fantasy? As David Hume (surely a skeptic if ever there was one) long ago pointed out, when one leaves the philosopher's study, one *cannot* in practice behave as a skeptic. The picture of people falling for Hitler because, owing to Kant's influence, they doubted the reality of the sensory world is too ridiculous for words.

PEIKOFF'S VIEW OF Kant's ethics is equally mistaken, although it at least makes more sense to think that someone's moral principles can have practical effect than it does to assume that the key to politics is to be found in recondite theories of epistemology. Peikoff has a good deal to say about Kant's stress upon duty and "categorical imperatives"; but, oddly enough, he never tells us what the categorical imperative *is*. It is, unfortunately, easy to understand the reason for this slight omission on Peikoff's part. Had he quoted the second formulation of the categorical imperative, he would have at once given the lie to his charge that Kant laid the foundation for the Nazi doctrine of blind submission to the omnipotent state. That formulation reads: "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."

It should come as no surprise that besides being radically flawed in its thesis the book is unreliable on matters of detail as well.

In point of fact, Kant's own political views were, broadly speaking, those of a classical liberal. He strongly supported private property, for example, and devised a scheme he hoped would lead to the abolition of war. Peikoff is at least partly aware of these facts. He says, "Kant is not a full-fledged statist. . . . [He] accepts certain elements of individualism," but has the gall to dismiss these as trivial compared to the implications he perversely derives from Kant's metaphysical and epistemological views. Peikoff wisely does not attempt to explain why such preeminent defenders of freedom as Ludwig von Mises and F. A. Hayek have regarded themselves as Kantians.

There is, I think, a deeper flaw in Peikoff's approach to intellectual history than his errors, however grave, about a particular thinker. One has no sense, when reading Peikoff, that Kant (or any of the other thinkers he condemns) was responding to serious intellectual problems. If, for example, Kant differed with Aristotle, the thought never seems to have occurred to Peikoff that he may have had some legitimate reasons for doing so. Peikoff gives us a history of philosophy with the arguments left out. Someone unfortunate enough to derive all his knowledge of Kant from Peikoff's pages would have no conception at all of why Kant's successors regarded him as a profound thinker rather than the proponent of "a perverted theory that no one could mean."

In refusing to consider philosophical arguments for the views of which he disapproves, Peikoff is guilty of the dogmatism and pragmatism he is so quick to condemn in others. He says, in effect, look at the terrible consequences of adopting certain doctrines: Kant leads to Hitler; therefore, Kantianism is to be rejected. What is this but a particularly blatant form of pragmatism, a doctrine he holds to be the American variety of Kantianism?

It should come as no surprise that, besides being radically flawed in its thesis, the book is unreliable on matters of detail. Edgar Jung, here called a Nazi, was in fact a Catholic conservative adviser to Franz von Papen and was killed by the Nazis in 1934. Ludwig Klages, although at one time a member of the *George Kreis,* was not a philosophical spokesman for Stefan George, with whom he quarreled. Carl Schmitt was never a communist. Kurt Gödel did not make the idiotic claim that all mathematical systems are inconsistent. Herbert Spencer did not ignore the fact that man lives by production and is able to create increasing amounts of wealth; this fact happens to lie at the basis of his social philosophy. Henry George was not a statist. Finally, what is known as the Renaissance was not, at least according to historians, primarily an Aristotelian movement; many of its leading figures, such as Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, were in fact supporters of one of Peikoff's *bêtes noires,* Plato. Peikoff might take a look at a book by Ernst Cassirer, a philosopher whom he sneers at in passing: *Individual and Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy.*

Those in search of an explanation for Hitler would be well advised to look elsewhere. Peikoff's book is nothing but strident and uninformed advocacy, unredeemed by humor, art, or insight. Reading it is an unrewarding task. ■

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Dispatch

Rejoycings in Dublin

JOHN GORDON

O, won't we have a merry time
Drinking whiskey, beer and wine,
On coronation,
Coronation day?

—Ulysses

"I MAY BE BLIND." THAT was the first sentence that James Joyce wrote to his future wife, Nora Barnacle, in a letter reproving her for standing him up on their first date. He was twenty-two, penniless, and often drunk; she was a semi-educated twenty-year-old chambermaid in Finn's Hotel, near Dublin's Trinity College. Walking by the college railings, he had seen her "sauntering" in his direction, and she, noting his odd get-up, took him for a foreign sailor. So they met, and chatted, and made a date, and she stood him up, and he wrote a pained letter, revealing his lifelong penchant for self-dramatization: "I may be blind."

Thirty-five years after Joyce wrote that letter, he was in fact blind, and had just published a book, *Finnegans Wake,* named in part for the hotel where Nora Barnacle was working on that June day, set, probably, on her birthday, and concluding with a woman's voice based on hers, the voice of a woman guiding her blind husband over the landscape.

Connections like that, between art and life, between past and present, are something that students and fans of James Joyce experience often. That's why a thousand of us were in Dublin this June, to celebrate Bloomsday. Nineteen eighty-two is James Joyce's centennial year. He was born February 2, a date duly commemorated here and there when it rolls around, and of course especially this year. But the real red-letter day on the Joycean calendar, and the occasion for the summer's congregation in Dublin, is June 16. Because, although Nora Barnacle failed to show up for the first appointment with her foreign sailor, she did appear for the second one, on June 16. They met in front of the house where Oscar Wilde was born and grew up; they strolled around and chatted, and wound up on the banks of the Grand Canal, the foliage of which has long made it a favored Dublin spot for courting couples. ("The trees of the Grand Canal," said one local wag, "are more sinned against than sinning.") It was probably there that James Joyce had the first sexual experience for which he had not paid. We don't know for certain, but *something* sure happened, because the result was *Ulysses*—a book set on June 16, 1904, named after a foreign sailor, closing with the monologue of a woman, Molly Bloom, whose idiom resembles nothing so much as it does the prose style of Nora Barnacle, and featuring Leopold Bloom, about whom we know more than we do about any other character in literature, and of whom the hardest single thing to remember is that he never existed.

June 14: Art and life, past and present: Hugh Kenner, who can usually count on being the tallest member of any group he's part of (and who has recently pointed out that Leopold Bloom is probably the tallest member of *his* circle), towers above a throng of newsmen, Joyceans, dignitaries, and puzzled neighbors, and unveils a plaque set in the wall of 52 Clanbrassil Street. It reads:

Here in Joyce's Imagination
was born in May 1866
LEOPOLD BLOOM
Citizen, Husband, Father, Wanderer
Reincarnation of *Ulysses*

"This was done," he proclaims, "that the scripture might be fulfilled." The scripture is of course *Ulysses,* page 479 in the standard Random House edition of which has a former Lord Mayor of Dublin, near the peak of a Bloom hallucination, proclaiming that the house in which "Sir Leo Bloom" was born "shall be ornamented with a commemorative tablet," page 723 of which tells us that the house is at 52 Clanbrassil Street. So the Wilde at whose birthplace Joyce and Nora met seventy-eight years ago had it right, it seems: Life imitates art. One tries to explain this to the passers-by, who can't quite believe that all these people are here to consecrate the birthplace of someone who was never actually, you see, born. . . . "*Who* is it for?" asks one lady. "Bloom," someone tells her, "Leopold Bloom." "Bloom?" she says. "Oh dear no, they've got it all wrong; the Blooms were two blocks over that way. . . ."

June 15: Will Anthony Burgess, composer, novelist, and Joycean, go through with it? He is scheduled to speak this evening at the Mansion House, the cavernous auditorium of the Lord Mayor's official residence. The problem is that speaking in this place and being heard in it are two very different matters, due to the abominable acoustics and wayward sound-system. Yesterday's festivities there have been only intermittently intelligible, and as for the hourlong talk given this afternoon by Sir William Empson, it is I think safe to say that not one single person in the audience caught all of any one sentence. Rumor has it that Burgess, conscious of those two fiascos, is thinking of begging off—a rumor your reporter begins to credit when he spots him, a short time before the scheduled address, happily drinking and talking away in a Merrion Square pub.

But, as they say in his native land, not to worry. At the scheduled time, he is on the stage, striding upstage away from the refractory microphones, and bellowing out the words of a Joycean poem in a voice that simply brings the hall's acoustical gremlins to their knees. Eventually he will consent to use the microphones, but the point has been made: This voice is in charge here, and the auditorium had better not try any funny business. The address will be heard. And quite an address it is. Burgess begins by announcing that the given title, "formulated in a state of Dublinesque bibulousness," has nothing to do with what he is going to say. Then, without any notes, so far as I can see, and certainly without a single hem or haw, he proceeds to say in an hour pretty much all that can be said in an hour

JOHN GORDON *is the author of* The Myth of the Monstrous Male and Other Feminist Fables *and* James Joyce's Metamorphoses.

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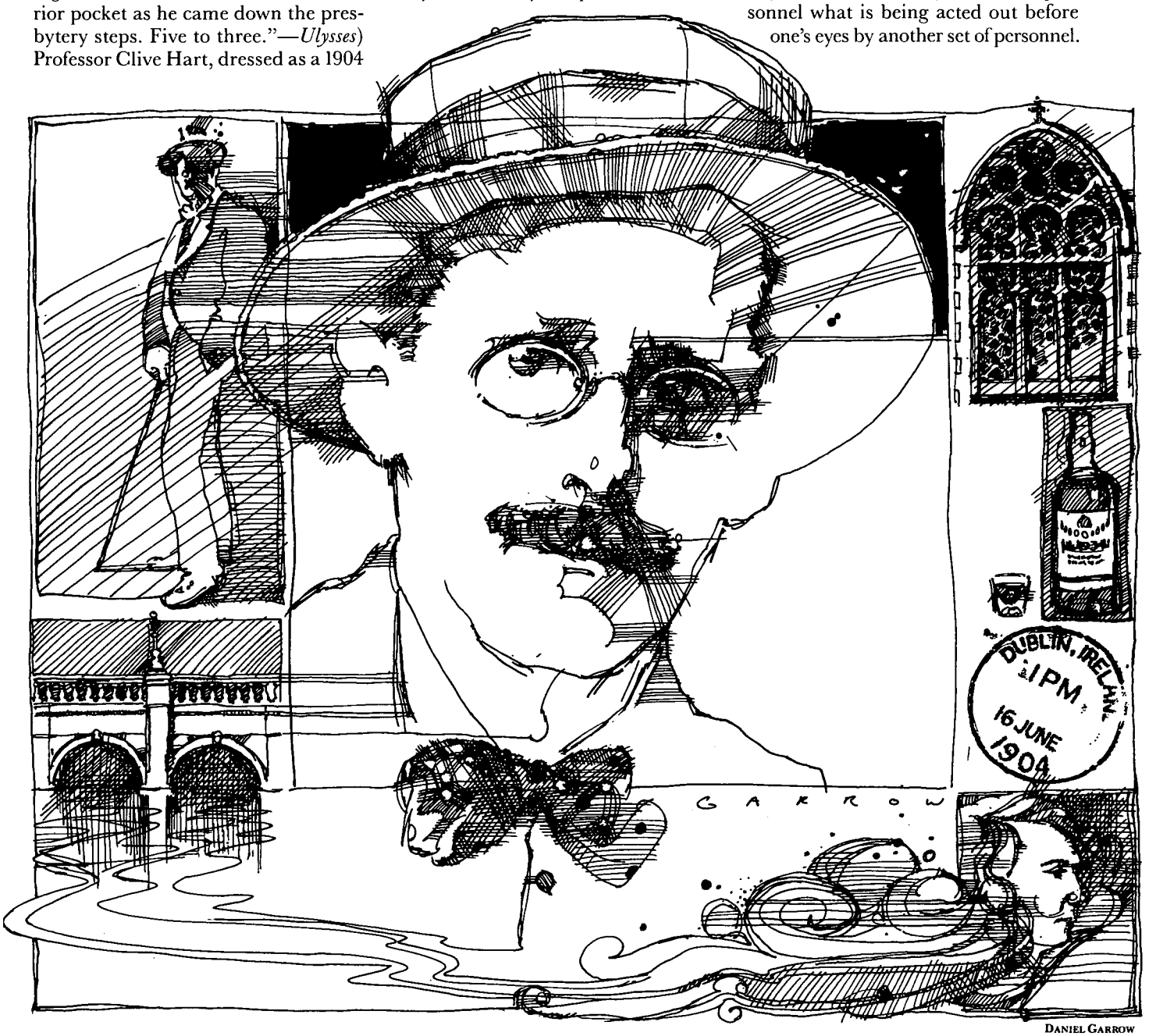
about Joyce and music, and to say it pretty much as well as it can be said. At the same time, he almost incidentally raises the roof: "You're walking," he concludes, "the full score of the most massive oratorio ever composed." He means Joyce's Dublin, to which his audience now returns in a considerably more roused state than they left it, an hour ago. Extraordinary. What was he drinking in that Merrion Square pub?

*JUNE 16: THE SURREAL OVER*lap of the actual, the imagined, and the in-between all comes to a head on June 16, when at precisely five minutes to three ("The superior, the very reverend John Conmee S. J. reset his smooth watch in his interior pocket as he came down the presbytery steps. Five to three."—*Ulysses*) Professor Clive Hart, dressed as a 1904 Jesuit, comes down the steps of Father Conmee's presbytery and blesses a real priest (at least I *think* he was real) who happens to be cycling past. So commences all over Dublin "O Rocks," a street-theater re-creation of the scores of characters that Joyce set on their rounds in his middle episode, "Wandering Rocks." Over on Grafton Street, Molly's roguish lover, Blazes Boylan, is peering down the cleavage of the shopgirl from whom he is ordering Molly's gift ("A young pullet," he thinks approvingly; she may be his next), as the cuckolded Leopold Bloom, down by the quays, is sadly pondering, in compensation, a pornographic book named *Sweets of Sin*, as the five sandwichmen advertising Hely's stationery shop—H, E, L, Y, and S, respectively—snake their way through the Dublin traffic, and a blind stripling, who isn't really blind, if you follow, is having a hell of a time fending off the real-life Dubliners who keep trying to help him across the streets, because Dubliners as a rule are just as kind-hearted as they were in 1904, when Leopold Bloom took the arm of the original blind stripling and helped him to his destination.

All this and much more occurs to the accompaniment of Radio Ireland's nonstop reading of *Ulysses*, dirty words and all, which has been timed to reach "Wandering Rocks" just as the chapter is being enacted. The eerie result is that, from the jumbo transistors of passing Dubliners, one can occasionally hear described by one set of personnel what is being acted out before one's eyes by another set of personnel.



DANIEL GARROW

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The spectacle concludes at 4:00 P.M. at the Ormonde Hotel, where, in *Ulysses,* Bloom, Boylan, and others converge, and which in honor of the event has announced that it will be serving drinks at 1904 prices. As a consequence of which announcement there is, you might say, a mob—and your reporter, who happens to be staying in the modern-day Ormonde, finds 1904 blocking him from the comforts of a 1982 hotel room.

Bloomsday should have ended there, gloriously. What follows is the sort of thing that reminds one why the embittered Joyce left in body the Dublin he never left in memory. It occurs at the "Bloomsday Banquet" that evening at the Burlington Hotel, a name that will live in infamy. Jorge Luis Borges, although blind, aged, and infirm, has come from Argentina to honor the writer whose spiritual descendant in many ways he is. After the dinner is finished and the toasts made, he is helped to the chair from which he will speak. He begins. At which moment, through the wall to the adjoining hall, comes the booming, tub-thumping noises of an "Irish" cabaret in full cry, rollicking and roistering and shure-and-begorra-ing their fool fake heads off. Borges continues, now inaudible to most of the people in the room. The tub thumping continues. Some guests run out into the lobby, furious. There are reportedly fist-fights; the manager reportedly announces that the Cabaret has paid as much as the Joyceans and that's that. Borges is helped down, having been heard satisfactorily by virtually nobody, the applause mingling in his ears with the yo-ho-hoing still blasting from the next room.

Joyce, who always knew that the stage Irishman was his natural enemy, and whose work is full of horrible examples of what Dubliners can do to artists, wouldn't have been surprised. Still, an outrage is an outrage—and, gentle reader, if you ever go to Dublin, please make it a point not to patronize the Burlington Hotel. Besides, their wine is overpriced.

June 17–19: So there are ups and downs, and speeches and talks and ceremonies, and hundreds of papers read at scores of sessions. Above all, there is incongruity. The president of Ireland, while Archie Bunker (in the person of Carroll O'Connor) looks on, unveils a statue of Joyce, in the process reading from a Joycean passage describing the country of which he is the titular head as "venal." The author's grandson, obviously the inheritor of some Joycean prickliness, sends a message that he intended to be present until he discovered that the statue was commissioned by American Express. The author's daughter, confined in an English asylum, is reported to have ordered sherry and cake for all her fellow inmates. The pub that supplies the setting for *Finnegans Wake,* indisputably the most musical book ever written, now features a sign reading "No Singing Allowed," and in the rhododendron beds where Molly and Leopold first lay down together there is now a sign reading, "Please do not disturb the blooms."

THE FINAL OCCASION, for those who can make it, occurs on the other side of Ireland, in the Galway that Nora Barnacle had left shortly before her meeting with Joyce on the streets of Dublin. Someone has had the grand idea of commemorating her home, too. Five years ago, doing some research on her background, I had been shown into the room of an old lady who remembered Nora's family. "This gentleman," said my guide, "wishes to speak to you about the Barnacles." "Oh, Jesus forgive me," said the old lady. "Here I've just been saying my rosary, and now I'm about to start backbiting." Although most of her memories were of Nora's mother—who was evidently hell on wheels in her day—she did recall seeing Nora on one of her return trips. "The prettiest girl in Galway," she said, and remembered especially a vision of her standing in the sun "with her beautiful hair shining in the sunlight." To a Joycean, it was like the fabled moment in *Roots* when Alex Haley hears the continuation of the story he had learned as a child. The second line of the letter with whose first line I began this account is, "I looked for a long time at a head of reddish brown hair and decided it was not yours," and the most famous passages of Joyce's last book are celebrations of his wife's "reddish brown hair," the "auburnt streams" that blend with Dublin's Liffey River and, finally, all the world's rivers of life.

So on the last day of the week when Joyce and Ireland finally became more or less reconciled, we gathered around the house to which Joyce had once made his own western pilgrimage (he pretended to be interested in buying it in order to be shown Nora's old room), were read a touching letter of thanks from Lucia Joyce, and unveiled a second plaque, this time to a real person—a person whose earthy reality, in fact, Joyce credited with making his own art possible. Few things are certain about the grand old sinner, but this much is: He would have had mixed feelings about the events of this week, and he would have approved completely of the way it concluded.

Twenty-two years from now, June 16, 2004, will be the Bloomsday centennial. There are those of us who hope to be around, and in Dublin, for that, too. ■

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Film

Author! Author!, directed by Arthur Hiller.
Blade Runner, directed by Ridley Scott.

Director? Director?

STEPHEN HARVEY

THERE'S ONE THING TO BE said for a director like Arthur Hiller—no matter what manner of typescript he's given to transform into celluloid, he certainly does let its basic essence shine through. If he's handed a mass of starchy glop à la *Making Love*, all those carbohydrates are going to show up on screen undiluted. Should he be presented with a jaunty extended sitcom pumped full of "heart," as in the current *Author! Author!*, he'll serve up something that would warm the cockles of Grant Tinker. In certain quarters, this would be deemed professionalism of a very high order. I have another name for it, but never mind that.

True to form, his newest has been embellished with Hiller's standard signature touches—every interior set is bathed in enough light to suit a surgical theater, an expedient way to speed up the shooting process, even if it does play havoc with such niceties as mood or nuance, or giving the audience some clue as to whether the action is taking place at high noon or during The Hour of the Wolf. Yet *Author! Author!*'s author is not Hiller, but screenwriter Israel Horovitz; more than that, as the film unreels it's apparent that Horovitz is not merely the film's creator, but its subject as well. Up to now, Horovitz has been a prolific off-Broadway playwright of considerable if not overpowering *réclame*, whose past achievements include a chilling one-acter called *The Indian Wants the Bronx*, in which *Author! Author!*'s star, Al Pacino, first commanded attention over a decade ago. This movie's hero likewise writes for the theater, and enough of his history parallels Horovitz's to make the attendant wish-fulfilling embroidery of the story a little unsettling. Some years ago, Horovitz wrote a play called *The Primary English Class*, about the unequal struggle of a young English instructor with her malapropism-ridden alien pupils. It starred Diane Keaton, and was presented at off-Broadway's Circle in the Square to tempered praise from the critics and moderate commercial success. In this film, Ivan Travalian (Pacino) is readying a piece called *English With Tears* for Broadway at a budget of one million-three (*Amadeus* should only have it so good), and manages to persuade a movie star of considerable magnitude (played by Dyan Cannon) to appear in it; at its unveiling, the press collectively swoons with rapture, and we get to hear snippets from every single rave notice. Music to the ears of any journeyman playwright, of course, but a rather protracted, distracting note for us civilians in the audience.

As I know nothing about Horovitz's personal life, there's no telling how much it corresponds with what is supposed to be the emotional core of this movie, but judging from the above professional self-homages, I have my suspicions. Travalian shares his Greenwich Village brownstone with second wife, Gloria (Tuesday Weld), his pubescent son from his former marriage, and Gloria's brood of four from her numerous past misalliances. Gloria has all the rootlessness of Nancy Mitford's comic shady lady, the Bolter, and none of the charm. Every so often she just picks up and forms some new liaison, leaving her offspring choking on their tears in her wake. When she acts true to form, the kids, instead of rejoining their natural fathers, all opt to stay with Travalian, because he is such a lovable parent. Hiller and Horovitz have concocted a bottomless fount of ways to demonstrate his lovableness. Pacino acts lovable for the cameras—joking, cajoling, carousing, hugging. When that palls, all five kids get to *tell* us how lovable he is, individually and in concert, in dewy

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close-ups. Of course, he's no less than they deserve, since they're so irrepressibly lovable themselves. Five kids in one house, and nary a moppet in the place ever cries or fights or screams, or jockeys to steal an extra moment of attention from its harried Dad. All of them have more than their share of punchy, precocious one-liners, worthy of the acclaimed oeuvre of the scribe who has raised them. And each has at least one cute idiosyncrasy to parade in this domestic show-and-tell. Particularly beguiling is the shtick reserved for diminutive Geraldo, who can't pee while anybody is watching (the audience included, who get to giggle over this routine at least three times).

With so much screen time being lavished on the adorableness of Al and the kids, the principal female grownups in the film are treated so cavalierly as to be two blond, imponderable ciphers. Gloria's sole function in *Author! Author!* seems to be to make her spouse look saintly by comparison. She's depicted as monstrously irresponsible in regard to her children, which underscores Travalian's samaritan sweetness; you're also supposed to find it poignant that his love for her nevertheless endures (until the obligatory Pacino outburst at the climax), but under the circumstances, such devotion seems next-door to loony. Alice, the movie star, is there to show how attractive Travalian is to any woman with normal, steadfast instincts; once she fulfills her function in the plot, this obliging lady practically disappears from the film, withdrawing from the hero's hearth with nary a trace of ego or resentment. She's certainly missed thereafter, because Cannon is delicious in the part, playing Alice as a quaver-voiced California ditz nonplussed by all these hop-headed New Yorkers among whom she's been uneasily transplanted. She even manages to give the sense, wholly unaided by the script, that there's a many-layered character there waiting to be explored, if only Hiller and Horovitz had given her enough footage to reveal herself. They certainly gave Pacino opportunity enough to display his repertoire of haggard stares and hunched-over stances. It's undeniably pleasant to watch him essay all this in a less dolorous context than usual, and heartening to see that he can adapt to the demands of sentimental comedy as gracefully as he does. I can understand why this actor might want to obliterate the acrid aftertaste left by *Cruising*, his last vehicle, but was the treacle of this Neil Simonized *Kramer vs. Kramer* the only antidote he could find? The on-screen smasheroo of *English With Tears* notwithstanding, *Author! Author!* is an eloquent argument for the blessings of writer's block.

WHERE HOROVITZ AND Hiller's film is compulsively antic, Ridley Scott's futuristic *Blade Runner* is comatose and clotted, stuffed with overwrought images wrapped around a vacuum where the script ought to be. The film takes place in Los Angeles forty years hence, imagined by production designer Lawrence G. Paull as a kind of high-tech Machu Picchu plunked down on the Ginza strip; helicopter autos flit by immense animated billboards of geishas blissfully popping tranquilizers, while the underclass down below eats fast-food sukiyaki and talks a street-slang mixture of Nipponese, Latino, and blaxpeak. Inside these twenty-first-century ziggurats, artfully arranged clumps of *objets trouvés* are ever so casually picked out by golden shafts of light penetrating an eternal charcoal murk. (It's hard to tell whether this is a function of future-world pollution, or the mere affectation of a cinematographer whose imagination is working overtime.) The costumes and hairdos are a garage-sale treasure trove of modes past, present, and intergalactic—you have a stripper in go-go plastic, a stern femme fatale sporting pompadour and shoulder pads out of a Roz Russell boss-lady hallucination, and a New Wave villain with a platinum Punk razorcut. All this punctilious homage to the hallowed craft of art direction raises a welter of questions that the script is too dispirited even to try to answer. It's perhaps picturesque to scatter antique photographs atop the hero's grand piano for him to stare at whenever he gets the twenty-first-century blues. But it's a meaningless sight unless we're given some clue as to who they're of, what they're doing there, and what connection they have to our dour, brooding protagonist.

Yet since the screenplay by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples is so muddled on the big points, I suppose it could scarcely have been expected to trouble itself with such minor details. *Blade Runner* tries to bring together a sci-fi plot and the meandering, languorous manner of a postwar *film noir* played absolutely straight—and the two stubbornly refuse to coalesce. The story involves a band of robots created as slave labor to toil on extraterrestrial colonies, who have escaped to Los Angeles and are slated for annihilation by the humans who created them. Harrison Ford, a bitter, laconic ex-cop, is the one drafted for the task, in the meantime falling in love with Rachael (Sean Young), a drone who doesn't know she's a clone. The main distinction, we're told, between the human beings and the robots is that the latter haven't been programmed to feel emotion, but the inadvertently comic wrinkle on all this is that the flesh-and-blood types are such affectless tough-guys themselves that you could hardly tell these species apart with a gene-scanner. Ford's weary, pithy voice-over narration is supposed to sound like Son of Mike Hammer, but more resembles Steve Martin without that slight glottal edge to tip us off that he's Only Kidding. At least the anachronistic adventurers Ford played for George Lucas (in *Raiders* and the Star Wars series) were granted a note of self-deprecating irony, but the harder *Blade Runner* plays for keeps, the more fatuous Ford is made to look. Perhaps it was Lucas's hyperthyroid editing that gave Ford his air of jauntiness; all he's left with here is the deadpan. *Blade Runner* is yet another movie fabricated by youthful wizards who know everything there is to know about the mechanical side of filmmaking, but whose notions of screen dramaturgy would have been banal in 1946; it's the *One From the Heart* of science fiction. ▣

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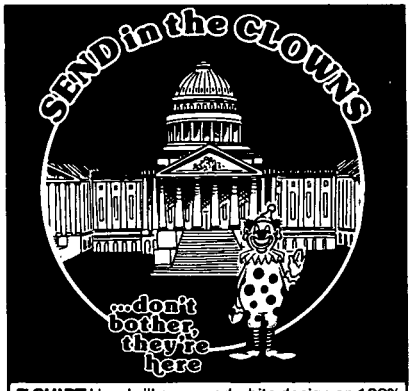

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Making things work

Fortunately for the rest of the country, the overwhelming majority of those who now call themselves "neoliberals" live or work in Washington, D.C. Unfortunately for the rest of the country, there is as yet no known cure for this disease to keep it from spreading. It has already spread, in fact, to the far corners of the country, through such journals as the *New Republic* and the *Washington Monthly.* You may have first read about the epidemic in the February 1982 *Esquire,* which featured on its cover a photo of Senator Gary Hart (D-Colo.), Senator Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), and Representative Tim Wirth (D-Colo.), with the cover line, "Washington's Neoliberals: Smart and tough, but can they lead?"

The article itself never really answers that question, but it does give some interesting perspectives on what "neoliberalism" is, as well as some rather bothersome hints about its potential as a political movement. "The neoliberals are children of the fifties," the article maintains. "They are cool and dispassionate—fifties virtues—almost technocratic in their approach to problems. Their world—rather, the world they hope to create—is filled with microchips, robots, and computers. They espouse an adherence to liberal goals but insist on pragmatic means; they intend to remain free of ideological commitment. . . ."

What is really going on with the neoliberals is a move away from "compassion" and toward Making Things Work. The key word is "make," in the either/or sense of combining actual force with incentives, as one would train a German shepherd by rewarding good and punishing unacceptable behavior. Read any article on neoliberals and you'll find them, first and foremost, disavowing many of the Great Society–type programs constructed by conventional liberals in the 1960s. Why? Because they Didn't Work.

No argument here, of course; they didn't work, at least insofar as helping those they were intended to help. (In terms of building a permanently dependent underclass and a permanently entrenched class of managers and rule makers, they worked only too well.) But why, according to the neoliberals, didn't they work? Because the people who constructed them were too committed to ideology. The sixties liberals were weighed down by an all-encompassing vision of what they wanted American society to be. How childish, the neoliberals seem to say. How naive.

In fact, the Great Society–type programs failed not because they were rooted in ideology, but because their ideology was *wrong*. Sixties liberals believed it was okay, and even necessary, to completely reshape individuals' lives and environments to conform with the liberals' vision of how people should behave. But sixties liberals were more competent as social philosophers than as social engineers. In contrast, neoliberals are social engineers in the fullest sense. Just as professional engineers must confine their designs and constructions to the inherent limitations of the materials they use, neoliberals appear to be sensitive to "human nature," shying away from programs that they may think are desirable, but which people will never go along with. Such programs simply Won't Work.

Sixties liberal ideology manifested itself in foreign policy as well, holding that no aid program—even war was considered an aid program by some—was too expensive if it helped lift other people out of poverty, ignorance, and communism into liberal democracy, Water Piks, and two-button suits with narrow lapels. In contrast, neoliberals, by their own admission, have no foreign policy whatsoever. To the extent they talk about it at all, they simply believe that it should work.

That's why they're big on so-called defense reform—buy whatever weapons you want, so long as they work—and why they tend to favor a military draft and, even better, universal compulsory national service. The All-Volunteer Force allows some people to choose not to serve, so it Doesn't Work. But the military draft arbitrarily singles out some groups, causing resentment, so it doesn't work very well either. However, universal service, by forcing *everyone* to perform some civilian or military public service, would eliminate the complaining. Now that would work.

Unlike sixties liberals, neoliberals tend to like private enterprise. They do so not because of any concern for economic freedom, but rather because they view it as a useful tool for getting things done right. They favor economic growth, for example, and worry about insufficient investment in capital equipment. Sixties liberals concerned about a shortage of capital equipment would have simply bought some with federal money and given it away; neoliberals, smart, tough, and pragmatic, are also more sophisticated. They would allow tax credits for companies that purchased certain kinds of equipment, and then set up an elaborate reward-and-punishment system to make sure businesses understood how they were expected to use the equipment.

There's nothing wrong with allowing people—and businesses are made up of people—to keep more of what they've earned, but the neoliberals aren't motivated by that at all. Their entire view of society is very much from the top down. If you started things moving in the right direction—a push here, a pull there, a carrot here, a slap with a two-by-four there—and instituted enough smart, tough, pragmatic management, then people would start doing what they're supposed to do. Things Would Work.

One of *Esquire*'s observations about neoliberals is worth a second look: "The world they hope to create is filled with microchips, robots, and computers." That's not really surprising, since one of the nice things about microchips, robots, and computers is that they don't worry about ideology, have no preferences of their own, and don't make trouble if you program them right. Come to think of it, maybe if we had just a few more smart, tough, pragmatic leaders here in Washington, we all could learn to go along with the program.

—CHRIS HOCKER

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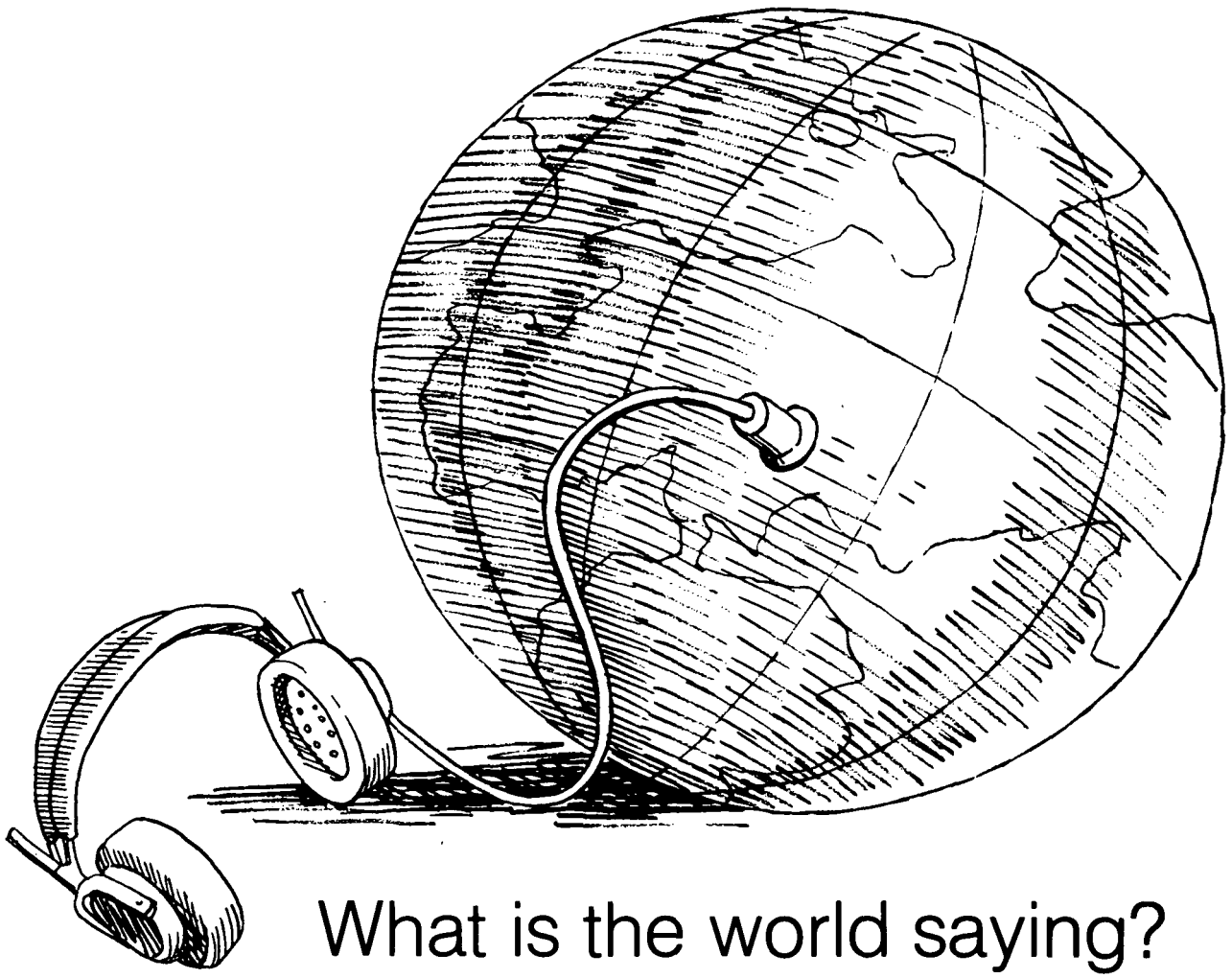

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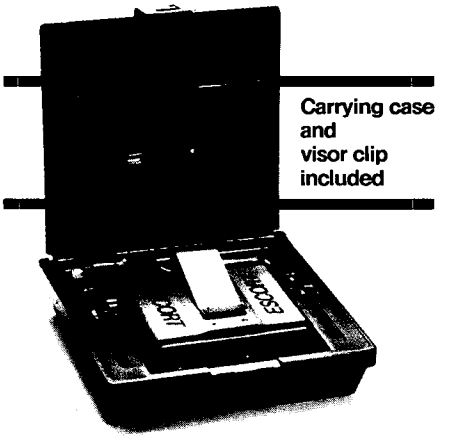

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